Sunday, December 16, 2007 ★★★ 19 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 8 P20

JALOSJOS FREED TODAY; story below

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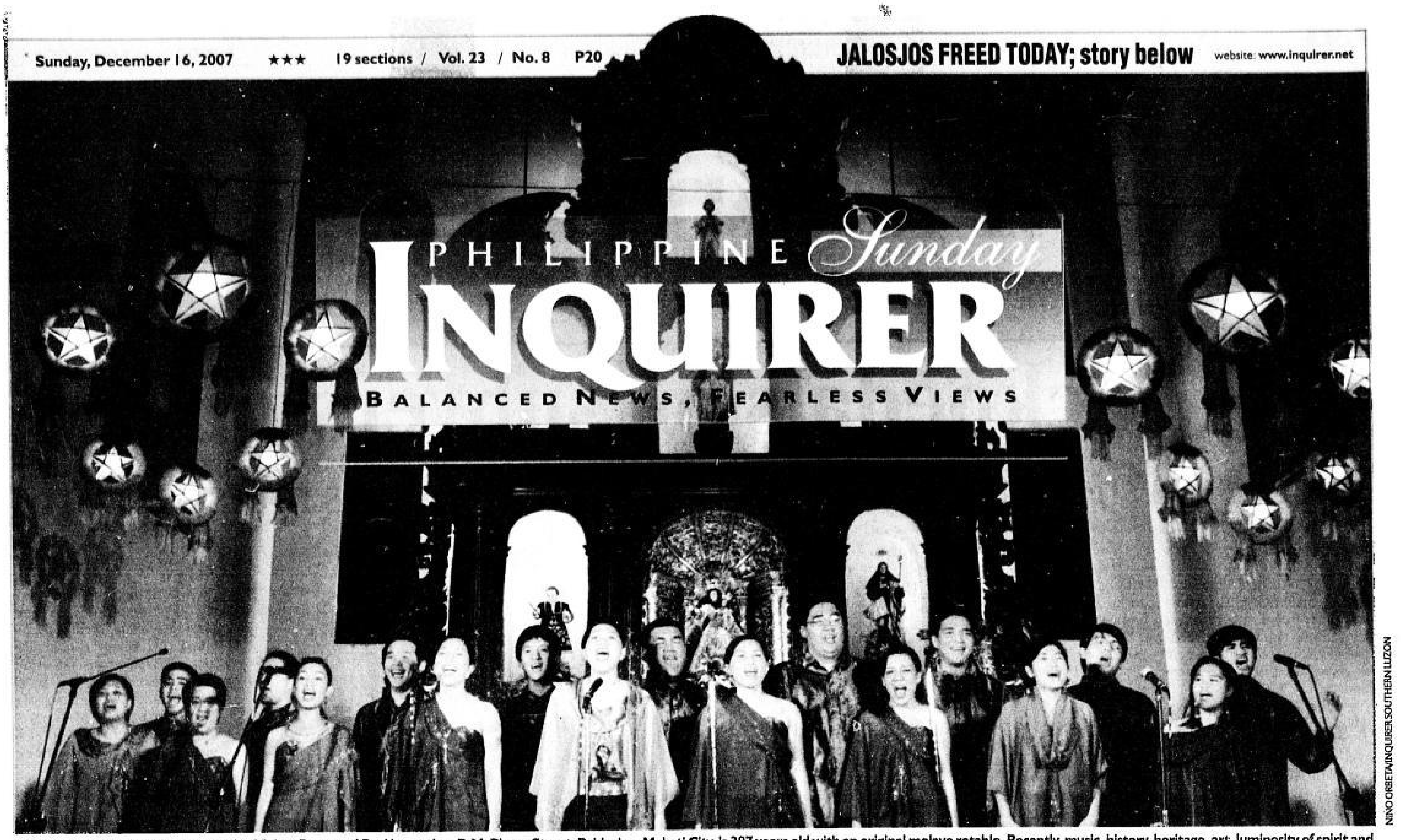
PHILIPPINE *Sunday*
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



NIÑO ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

SPIRIT OF THE SEASON: The parish of Saints Peter and Paul located on D.M. Rivera Street, Poblacion, Makati City, is 387 years old with an original molave retablo. Recently, music, history, heritage, art, luminosity of spirit and openhanded goodness converged at the ancient church when the Bukas Palad (Outstretched Hand) Music Ministry held a Christmas concert there to raise funds for the preservation of this heritage landmark. *(Story below.)*

US backs down in Bali

Climate summit ends with plan for new global warming pact

BALI, INDONESIA—IN A dramatic finish to the United Nations climate conference, world leaders yesterday adopted a plan to negotiate a new global warming pact by 2009, after the United States backed down in a battle over wording supported by developing nations and Europe.

The US stand had drawn loud boos and sharp floor rebukes—"If you are not willing to lead, then get out of the way!" one delegate demanded—before Undersecretary of State Paula Dobriansky reversed her position, allowing the adoption of the so-called "Bali Roadmap."

The upcoming two years of talks, which will fashion a successor to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, could determine for years to come how well the world will cut emissions of greenhouse gases blamed for global warming. The move came after a year of scientific reports warning that rising temperatures will cause widespread drought, floods, higher sea levels and worsening storms.

"This is the beginning, not the end," said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who made an urgent plea for progress in the final hour of talks. "We will have to engage in more complex, long and difficult negotiations,"

US BACKS/ A8

INQUIRER PHOTO

AFTER fumbling down to sixth place in a SEA Games it highlighted with a controversial boxing protest, the Philippines finds its redemption in swimmer Miguel Molina.

Swimmer Molina is MVP, gives luster to dull RP finish

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, THAILAND—He made a big splash in the pool and generated the biggest waves in the entire 24th Southeast Asian Games.

Swimmer Miguel Molina gave the Philippines something to crow about Saturday as the curtain came down on the country's worst ever finish in the biennial games. With four gold medals, three of them individual, Molina was chosen Most Valuable Player of the Games.

In a dominating performance in swimming that also included a silver and a bronze medal, Molina was the biggest and most significant contribu-

24th SEA GAMES

SWIMMER/ A6

Bells of Diliman ring again on Dec. 18

By Julie M. Aurelio

ON TUESDAY, STUDENTS OF THE University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, will get reacquainted with an old and nostalgic tradition—the gentle, distinct tolling of the 36 Dutch bells of the Carillon.

The 36 bells, forged from bronze and magnesium, will be formally turned over to the UP administration this week as part of the university's centennial rites.

It took two years and P14 million in contributions for the alumni to bring back the melodious chimes of the "Bells of Diliman," which suffered the cruelty of neglect and time during its 55 years.

"We thought it would be a very good flagship project for the centennial next

BELLS/ A6

JDV III, fiancee back off from Dec. 20 date

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE INVITATIONS HAD BEEN SENT.

He had proposed to her on April Fool's Day, certain that he was not being a fool in deciding to give love and marriage a second chance.

After all, at 44, businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III was more than ready to settle down. "I wanted to have a normal family life. I'm still young, and I would like to have my wife to spend my life with and not be alone," said the son and namesake of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Karen accepted his proposal—and, later, a diamond engagement ring. The

JDV III/ A8

Music, history, hearts converge in ancient church

By Pocholo Concepcion
Entertainment

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS sprang to life one drizzly evening recently at the Saints Peter and Paul Church in Poblacion, Makati.

For about two hours, the 387-year-old church resembled a concert hall as the popular religious choir Bukas Palad performed a well-conceived repertoire of songs for the holiday season.

The show, "Pasko Na Sa Sampiro!," was the result of a series of meetings between leaders of the church's "5 P.M. Choir" and the Bukas Palad (BP) Music Ministry.

"Sampiro," a contraction of San Pedro, was what the Filipinos of the time called Spanish-era Makati.

The concert's high point was the

MUSIC/ A6

GUSTO KO TUMIRA SA VILLAGE NA YAN! PAYAPA AT MALINIS!

Mini Christmas Village lights up eyes of young, old

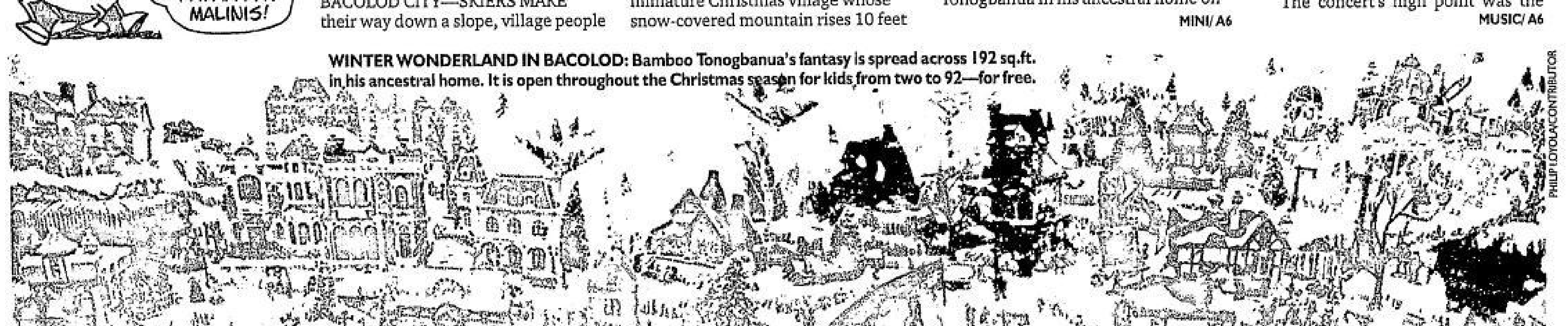
By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—SKIERS MAKE their way down a slope, village people frolic in the snow while Santa dances to a Christmas polka.

It's all here in this 192-square-foot miniature Christmas village whose snow-covered mountain rises 10 feet above the ground.

Now on its 13th year, the Christmas Village of artist-designer Bamboo Tonogbanua in his ancestral home on

MINI/ A6



WINTER WONDERLAND IN BACOLOD: Bamboo Tonogbanua's fantasy is spread across 192 sq.ft. in his ancestral home. It is open throughout the Christmas season for kids from two to 92—for free.

PHILIP LOYOLA/CONTRIBUTOR

SUNDAY BIZ /B3

Give gifts made by makers who matter: Gifts and Graces is helping 15 NGOs to design their products to sell

Convicted rapist ex-Rep. Romeo Jalosjos freed today, says prisons chief

IF THINGS GO AS PLANNED, CONVICTED EX-REP. Romeo Jalosjos will be released today from the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City.

In a text message to the INQUIRER late last night, Bureau of Corrections Director Ricardo Dapat confirmed that Jalosjos, convicted of raping a minor, will be freed this morning.

"Yes, Jalosjos will be released Sunday, perhaps in the morning," Dapat said.

Jalosjos' life sentence was commuted by President Macapagal-Arroyo in April. As of May 30, 2007, Jalosjos had served 13 years, 5 months and 15 days, according to former BuCor Director Vicente Vinarao. *Julie M. Aurelio*

JOB market

Start your future here

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon and the whole of Visayas will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rains. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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GMA backpedals on subversion law

Palace says she will back measure only if it has grass roots support

By Michael Lim Ubac

FACING HOWLS OF PROTEST from lawmakers, rights victims and other civil libertarians, Malacañang yesterday backtracked on its plan to support the revival of the Anti-subversion Law.

In an interview over Radyo ng Bayan, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said President Macapagal-Arroyo was not personally seeking the revival of the long-dead law, a draconian measure employed by the Marcos dictatorship not only to break the back of the growing insurgency movement in the 1970s but to stifle all forms of dissent.

Bunye made the clarification two days after Ms Arroyo said she would support a proposal to revive the controversial law during a visit to Masbate City.

He claimed the President did not say outright that she was supportive of the revival of the law as proposed by Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis.

"She said if this initiative of Representative Solis is endorsed by the LPSA (Local Peace and Security Assembly), she would have no objection. In other words, if there is no grass roots support as exemplified by the LPSA, let it be," Bunye said.

There was "no need to panic at this point," said Bunye, adding that Congress should decide on the wisdom of Solis'. proposal.

"Let Congress deliberate on the proposal. But with or without an Anti-subversion Law, the objective is to stop insurgency," he said.

Ms Arroyo had discussed the proposed revival of the law in a speech during the Bicol region's LPSA held in Masbate City, the capital of the impoverished and communist-infested island-province.

The President had said: "Congressman Joey Solis of Sorsogon said he doesn't think we can get rid of them (communist rebels) unless we return the Anti-Insurgency Law. So, *sabi niya magpapasok siya ng panukalang batas sa Kongreso na* anti-insurgency *maibalik.* Okay *yun sa akin kung* okay *sa ating* assembly (So he said he will file in Congress a bill to revive the Anti-insurgency Law, that's okay with me if it's okay with the assembly)."

Poverty is cause

The President, Bunye said, had also made it clear she was concerned about the appalling poverty in the Bicol peninsula, including the islands of Masbate and Catanduanes, where the insurgents have a strong presence.

She had mentioned a "martial plan" to meet the challenges of poverty and insurgency. She distributed rice and high school scholarships to Masbateños during the event.

She had also described the communist rebels as a "low-level threat" that had not succeeded in taking over the government.

"But they (the rebels) disturb communities. So, it's time for their disruption and violation of human rights to be put to rest so that the nation can move ahead. As I said, they impede the progress and development of a number of rural areas," the President had said.

Get rid of NPA now

"If we want to be First World, we have to put a stop to their ideological nonsense once and for all. We have to get rid of them now or get rid of them later. Whatever happens, they must be stopped. But we want to get rid of them now at least before 2010.

"We have also told our military in no uncertain terms that if there are rogue elements, they must be brought to justice. But let it be noted that terrorists like armed communists are a threat to the sovereignty of the nation and they must be checked once and for all."

THE PRESIDENT gestures during her speech to the Bicol Local Peace and Security Assembly at Punta Nursery, Masbate, where she expressed support for the revival of the Anti-subversion Law. PCPO

Ms Arroyo's policy of eradicating the communist insurgency in three years, however, was pointed to by United Nations special rapporteur on human rights as one of the causes of the spate of extrajudicial killings in the country.

Ka Roger replies

Reacting to her remarks in Masbate, the Communist Party of the Philippines said Ms Arroyo, by pushing for the revival of the Anti-subversion Law, was "instigating the Armed Forces of the Philippines to commit more extrajudicial killings, abductions, illegal arrests and other fascist acts."

"It will further embolden the filing of trumped-up charges against legitimate organizations accused of being communist fronts," CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said in a statement furnished the INQUIRER.

Rosal also accused Ms Arroyo of laying the groundwork to prolong her term of office beyond 2010.

Weakened democracy

Quezon Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III said on Saturday that the revival of the Anti-subversion Law would not help end the decades-old communist insurgency. He said the government should instead focus on solving the causes of the insurgency, pursuing peace negotiations and protecting human rights.

The lawmaker stressed that freedom of thought, tolerance and principled debate were essential in a democracy. "Fear is its antithesis and weakens democracy," he said.

Solis also received his share of the flak. Leaders of the fisherfolk alliance Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas called on Bicolanos to "punish" Solis, a former military officer, by voting him out of office in 2010.

With reports from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Jerome Aning

WHAT'S INSIDE

ESPERON ordered killing of Trillanes, says lawyer /A4

'RUNNING priest' to hold 'simbang gabi' in Crame /A4

RP, 5 NATIONS agree on Coral Triangle conservation /A7

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Sumilao farmers to urge GMA to 'act decisively'

By Jerome Aning

FIFTY-FIVE FARMERS FROM Sumilao, Bukidnon, will meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo tomorrow to seek her help in getting back a 144-hectare property a giant corporation is turning into a hog farm.

To be accompanied by priests, nuns and lay groups from various Manila parishes, the farmers will march to the Palace for the first time to try and persuade Ms Arroyo to act decisively in their case.

The farmers, who are disputing the sale of the property to San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI) claiming that it should be subjected to land reform, marched on Malacañang on Dec. 7 but were allowed only upto the Palace gates and no government official came out to meet them.

The President was on her way home from Kuwait at the time.

Sincerity of cause

This time, Ms Arroyo will be around to meet with the farmers, who walked 1,700 kms from Barangay San Vicente in Sumilao to convince the government to stop the conversion of the land into a hog farm by SMFI.

They have been camping out in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform central office in Quezon City since reaching Manila on Dec. 3.

"If through our walk, we were able to convince the cardinal, the bishops, priests and the church people to the righteousness and sincerity of our cause, we are hopeful that we can likewise convince the President so that she will take decisive action to resolve our case," said Napoleon Merida Jr., chair of the San Vicente Landless Farmers Association.

Coordinators from the Ateneo-based Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan lay group, which is helping the farmers, said they were trying to get Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales to either join the farmers at Malacañang or meet with them at some point during the march.

Rosales, who served as bishop of Bukidnon for 11 years, said Mass for the farmers at the Ateneo on Dec. 5, during which he said he had written to the President on their behalf.

The farmers are all members of or descended from Bukidnon's indigenous Higaonon community.

Reverse status quo

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman said Malacañang had not indicated what the agenda for tomorrow's dialogue would be.

"I don't think I would be able to discuss the merits of the case during the dialogue because the case is pending with me," Pangandaman said in a phone interview.

He said his office was rushing the resolution of the case, which was only remanded to the DAR by Malacañang on Nov. 22.

The farmers' lawyer, Arlene Bag-ao, said they will ask the President to reverse the status quo order that Pangandaman issued on Wednesday ordering the farmers to respect SMFI's ownership and possession of the land and allows SMFI to proceed with ongoing form development activities.

Bag-ao said the order was "completely unacceptable" to the farmers who want SMFI to stop all activities on the property pending the DAR's resolution of the case.

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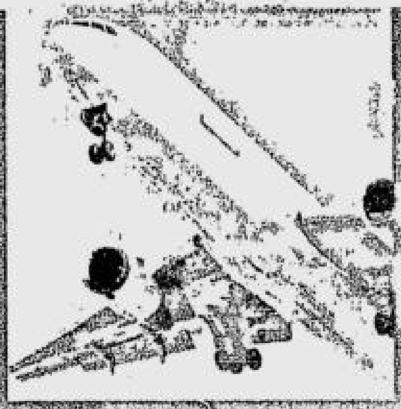

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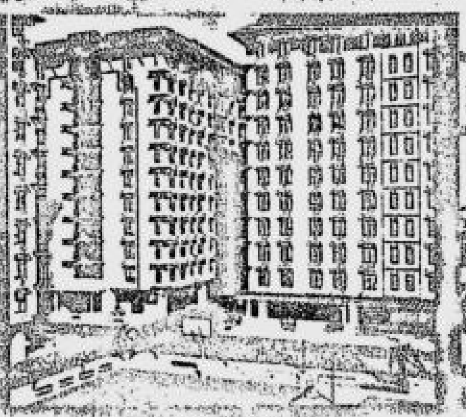

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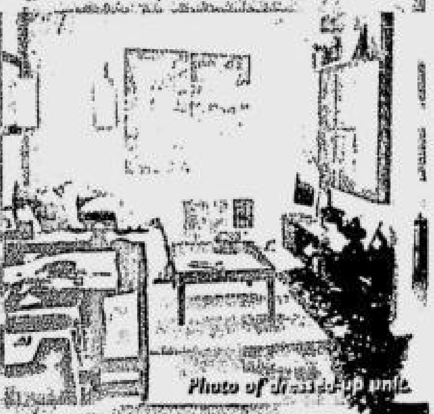

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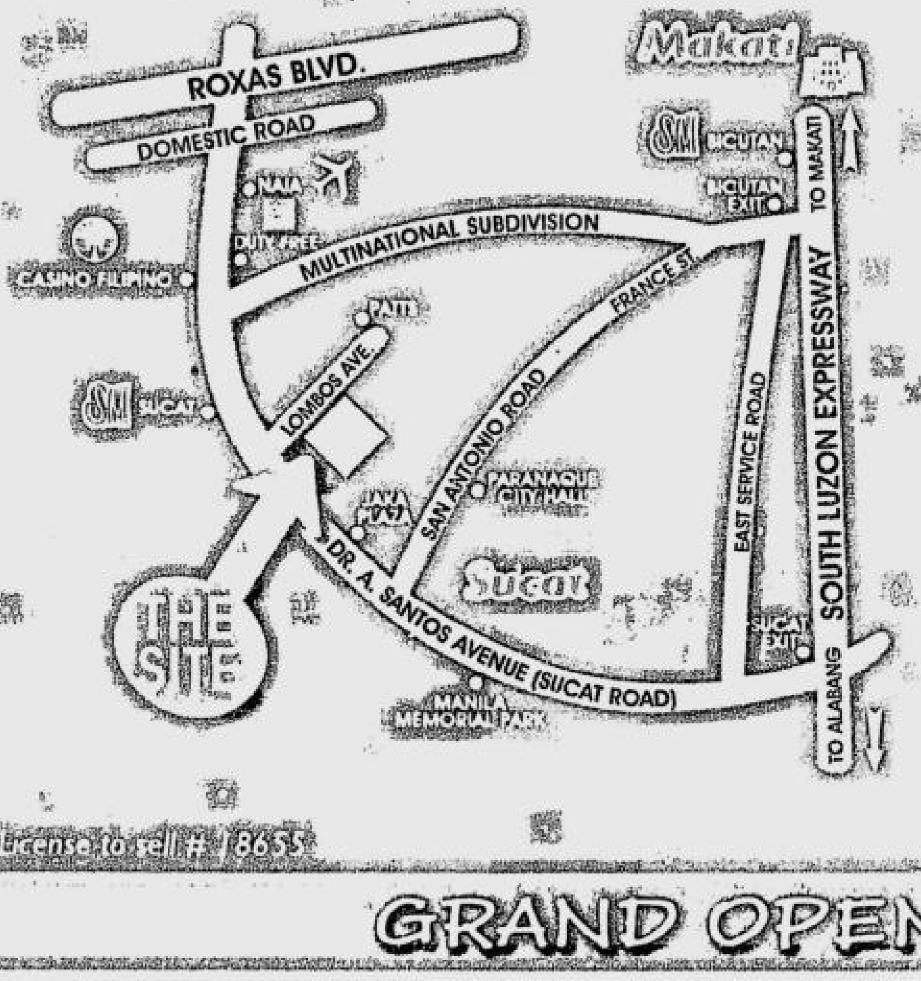

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Esperon ordered Trillanes, others killed, says lawyer

By Alcuin Papa

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon gave the order to execute Sen. Antonio Trillanes, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and the Magdalo soldiers involved in the Nov. 29 Peninsula Manila hotel siege, one of the civilians arrested with them claimed yesterday.

Lawyer Argee Guevarra told the INQUIRER that the soldiers did not carry out Esperon's order.

"This is a murderous policy of the chief of staff. It is illegal and it was a good thing it was not heeded by the majority of the soldiers," Guevarra said.

Esperon, however, denied giving the order.

Guevarra said he first heard of Esperon's order during the siege itself from one of his sources.

He said Trillanes was also "forewarned" of the execution. "He (Trillanes) said, *'di kakayanin ng mga sundalo. Maraming mamamatay* (The soldiers won't be able to do it. Many will die),'" Guevarra said.

Guevarra said Trillanes was concerned for the safety of Lim and the civilians and Magdalo soldiers around him. This was the reason Trillanes decided to turn himself in when police launched the operation to quell the revolt, he said.

Guevarra was among the 18 civilians arrested after the siege. He was released on Friday.

Information verified

Guevarra said he recently verified the information with another source, a military intelligence officer he would not identify because of the sensitivity of his post.

"My source said General Esperon gave the order to execute General Lim and Senator Trillanes. But this was ignored by the ground troops because there would have been collateral damage," Guevarra said.

According to the source, he said, Esperon was determined to have the order followed. "*Ok lang daw sa kanya* (It was fine with him) if there was collateral damage. There were a lot of civilians and members of media there."

But Esperon dismissed Guevarra's claim. "Maybe it's time for him (Guevarra) to make his own movie," he said.

AFP spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said Esperon and the military leadership gave no such execution order.

"It's all pure speculation on the part of Attorney Guevarra," Bacarro said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Geary Barias, who was the police ground commander during the siege, also denied any orders to kill were given.

"Knowing General Esperon, he would do no such thing. It would be foolish to give such an order," Barias said.

At the time of the siege, he said, the Marines were assigned to only guard the perimeter of the hotel and the PNP's Special Action Force (SAF) was tasked to enter the building.

"We had control of the situation. In a situation where the jobs of particular units of police and military are clear, no one crosses any boundaries," Barias said.

'Running priest' to usher in 'simbang gabi'

By Beverly T. Natividad, Alcuin Papa and Tina Santos

RELEASED ONLY two days ago after the dismissal of the rebellion charge against him, "running priest" Fr. Robert Reyes is set to go back to prison today.

But this time, he will return to celebrate the "simbang gabi," or dawn Mass, with detained Magdalo soldiers charged in the Nov. 29 Manila Pen revolt.

Reyes said he wanted to officiate the mass because the soldiers had not participated in a "simbang gabi" since 2003.

"They were so happy that I was imprisoned. They were praying that I won't be released until Dec. 25 so that from Dec. 16 to 24 there will be simbang gabi in the jail. But I was released," Reyes said.

The traditional "simbang gabi," one of the highlights of the Christmas celebration in the Philippines, runs for nine days beginning Dec. 16.

Reyes, with civilians Julian Advincula and lawyers JV Bautista and Argee Guevarra, were released from the Philippine National Police custodial unit on Friday, after a Makati court dismissed the rebellion charges against them.

Police deployed

Policemen will be joining the faithful today as the dawn Masses begin, but many of them may have to be content with listening to the sermons outside the churches.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Geary Barias said yesterday an additional 500 policemen and soldiers would be deployed in the vicinities of churches around Metro Manila to enhance security amid the expected throngs of churchgoers.

The contingent, composed of 300 PNP trainees and 200 soldiers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines National Capital Region Command (NCRComm), will augment the forces already assigned by the five police districts in Metro Manila around churches, Barias said.

He said the forces would guard against terrorist attacks, rumbles between youth groups such as occurred after previous dawn Masses, and pickpockets, muggers and snatchers.

"We are ready to make sure the Catholic faithful can attend the simbang gabi without having to worry about their safety," Barias told the INQUIRER.

He said the policemen and soldiers would be in uniform but would not carry high-powered firearms.

The NCRPO had stepped up police operations for the Christmas season by keeping watch on malls and other commercial areas around the metro to curb the activities of petty criminals.

The office noted the number of crimes usually increased during the Christmas season.

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7	Barrot, Celerina Bato	Provincial Director	DTI-Biliran
8	Beltran, Maylene Meniado	Director	DOH
9	Campos, Allan Gimenes	Deputy City Director	PNP-CAR
10	Campued, Arnel Mandigma	Division Chief	TESDA
11	Cascolan, Camilo Pancratius Pascua	Police Superintendent	PNP
12	Chiong, Mary Jane Tan	Manager II	BSP
13	Corpuz, Florante Martin	Asst. Schools Div. Superintendent	DEPED
14	David, Emmeline Calderon	Head, VRIS-OCOM	BOC-DOF
15	De la Paz, Sylvia Ciocon	Medical Specialist II	J. Fabella Mem. Hospital
16	De Lara, Wilma Jeanette San Luis	Assistant Director	PMS
17	Dijan, Florida Maranan	Assistant Regional Director	DILG-Taguig
18	Domingo, Lily Llacuna	Asst. Schools Div. Superintendent	DepEd
19	Duhaylungsod, Emmalinda Elago	Asst. Schools Div. Superintendent	DEPED-Bukidnon
20	Ebarle, Jocip Lanawan	Department Manager	TRANSCO
21	Escobarte, Pedro T. Jr.	Asst. Schools Div. Superintendent	DEPED-Leyte
22	Espina, Sefamar Peñaranda	Assistant Manager	BSP
23	Estrella, Maria Isabelita Maligaya	Chief of Hospital I	SLRW Hospital
24	Exconde, Irma Caliwagan	Chief	DOE
25	Farnazo, Allan G.	Asst. Schools Div. Superintendent	DEPED-So. Cotabato
26	Flores, Corazon Ignacio	Medical Officer VII	DOH
27	Geotina, Roberto D.	Assistant Secretary	DOF
28	Gonzaga, Edgardo M.	Director III	DOH-Zambo. City
29	Guerrero, Fortunato Gatdula	Police Superintendent	PNP
30	Guiang, Jennifer Tayco	Executive Asst. IV	SBMA
31	Jalandoni, Esther Pabellon	Public Attorney II	PAO-DOJ
32	Lorenzo III, Servillano Santiago Aliño	Public Attorney III	PAO-Cotabato
33	Losaria, Nerissa Lansangan	Supervising Admin. Officer	DepEd
34	Ludan, Steve Bentican	Police Superintendent	PNP-Reg IV
35	Macaraeg, Jimili Lopez	Police Superintendent	PNP-Reg I
36	Macaraig, Allan Dexter Panganiban	Director III	OP
37	Macatangay, Jose Martinez	Bank Officer III	BSP
38	Manansala, Annette Payumo	Head Executive Asst.	DENR
39	Mancile, Francisquiel Obias	Division Manager A	PPA
40	Manuel, Ralph Soan	Division Manager	TRANSCO
41	Marcelino, Evelyn A.	Division Chief II	PEZA
42	Marcial, Ma. Corazon Dela Pena	Assistant Director	BOT-IPO
43	Marquez Jr., Julian Ogayon	Vice President	TUP
44	Masarap, Marites Bolire	Chief Treasury Oper. Officer II	BOT-
45	Matuan, Inoyag Mamaroba	Plant Superintendent	NAPOCOR
46	Medina-Go, Imelda Rose O.	Special Investigator IV	CSC
47	Montoya, Jaime C.	Executive Director	PCHRD-DOST
48	Morantte, Claro Dennis Perez	Supervising Meat Control Officer	NMIS
49	Nilo, Prisco Duarte	Deputy Director	PAGASA
50	Nuñez, Catherine Bool	Chief Treasury Oper. Officer II	Bureau of the Treasury
51	Oplenaria, Edilberto Leones	Education Supervisor I	DepEd
52	Ordoño, Elizabeth Cawas	LGOO V	DILG
53	Paguio, Jorge Calimbas	Department Manager	TRANSCO
54	Paradela, Roque Anthony Repunte	Medical Specialist III	VSMMC
55	Piang, Annabelle Dumato-Piang	Judge	Municipal Trial Court
56	Pinto, Nestor N.	Police Senior Superintendent	PNP
57	Pocon, Gilda Vergara	Social Welfare Officer III	DSWD-CARAGA
58	Pujalte, Jose Brittanio, Jr. Sicat	Medical Specialist II	POC
59	Quiaem, Josephine Sule	Principal Engineer A	TRANSCO
60	Ramiro, Hilarion Medrano	Director III	Senate
61	Regis, Mimosa Balaoing	Chief TIDS	DTI
62	Santos, Severino Cruz	Assistant Regional Director	NEDA
63	Sarmiento, Ken Piczon	Sr. Auditing Systems Specialist	PHIC
64	Somera, Rudyard Madueno	Commander	PCG
65	Sunga, Yvette Tolentino	Local Leg. Staff officer IV	Sang. Panglungsod-Davao
66	Tiopes, Karina Rosa Santiago	Regional Director	DOT
67	Tortola, Randolph Bactong	ASDS	DEPED
68	Tulod, Carmina Pamintuan	Division Manager	Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Mgt. Corp.
69	Valderama, Olivia Martinez	Chief Postal Service Officer	PPC
70	Yu, Melvin Joy Lequit	Head	Cantilan Bank-Sur.del Sur
71	Zamora, Clarissa Geroche	Administrative Officer V	DEPED-Iloilo City
72	Zapanta, Leonardo Del Rosario	Education Supervisor I	DEPED-Pampanga

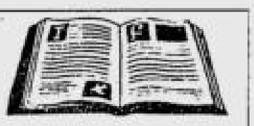
Please forward all information, feedback or report on or before December 24, 2007 to the Office of the Executive Director, CESB, No. 3 Marcelino Street, Holy Spirit Drive, Diliman, QC; or e-mail to erad@cesboard.gov.ph. or fax to 951-4983 or 951-3306.

All information received by the CESB shall be considered with STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY.

(Sgd.) MA. ANTHONETTE VELASCO-ALLONES
Executive Director

December 16, 2007

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Sunday, December 16, 2007
3rd Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Isaiah 35:1-6, 10

God himself will come to save us.

Let the wilderness and the arid land rejoice,
the desert be glad and blossom.
Covered with flowers, it sings and shouts with joy,
adorned with the splendor of Lebanon,
the magnificence of Carmel and Sharon.
They, my people, see the glory of Yahweh,
the majesty of our God.
Give vigor to weary hands
and strength to enfeebled knees.
Say to those who are afraid:
"Have courage, do not fear.
See, your God comes, demanding justice.
He is the God who rewards,
the God who comes to save you."
Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unsealed.
Then will the lame leap as a hart
and the tongue of the dumb sing and shout.
For water will break out in the wilderness
and streams gush forth from the desert.
For the ransomed of Yahweh will return:
with everlasting joy upon their heads,
they will come to Zion singing,
gladness and joy marching with them,
while sorrow and sighing flee away.

2nd Reading: James 5:7-10

Make your hearts firm, because the coming
of the Lord is at hand.

Be patient then, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. See how the sower waits for the precious fruits of the earth, looking forward patiently to the autumn and spring rains. You also be patient and do not lose heart, because the Lord's coming is near.

Beloved, do not fight among yourselves and you will not be judged. See, the judge is already at the door. Take for yourselves, as an example of patience, the suffering of the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name.

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

He will prepare your way before you.

When John the Baptist heard in prison about the activities of Christ, he sent a message by his disciples, asking him: "Are you the one who is to come or should we expect someone else?"

Jesus answered them, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life and good news is reaching the poor. And how fortunate is the one who does not take offense at me."

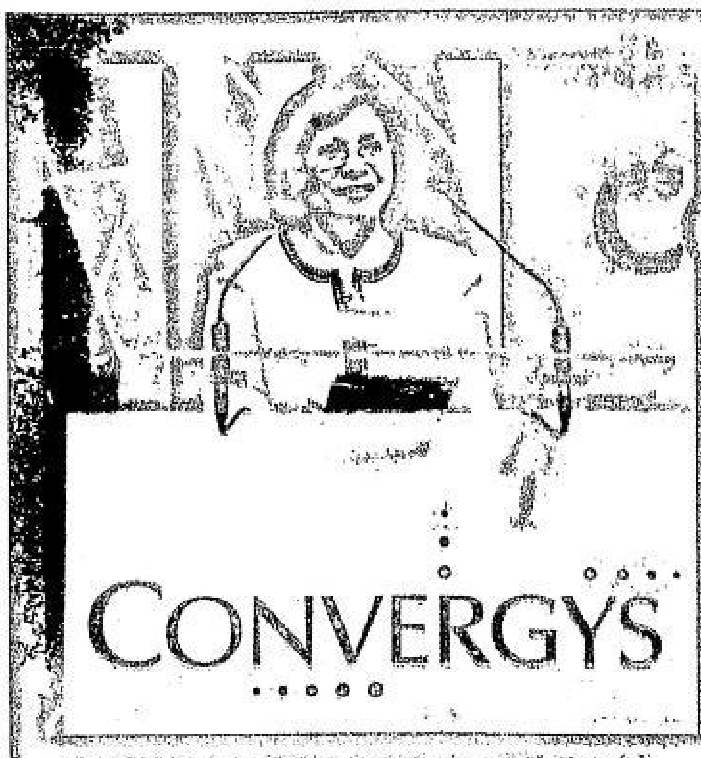
As the messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, "When you went out to the desert, what did you expect to see? A reed swept by the wind? What did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? People who wear fine clothes live in palaces. What did you actually go out to see? A prophet? Yes, indeed, and even more than a prophet. He is the man of whom Scripture says: I send my messenger ahead of you to prepare the way before you.

"I tell you this: no one greater than John the Baptist has come forward among the sons of women, and yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Commentary

Are we letting God be our strength, our hope, our courage, our joy, and our vindication? Our God comes to save us, to open our eyes to the truth and our ears to the Word spoken among us, and to set us dancing and singing. There is no place for mourning and sorrow—we are the glory and splendor of our God more surely than any tree or land. We must learn to wait, like the land waits for harvest. Our God comes, not perhaps as the people of the rapture keep harping, but our God comes, in peace, in freedom, in the poor, in those who speak the Word of God, in justice, in forgiveness and mercy. He comes to those who suffer, who are patient and forgiving, and he comes like the prophets—with a word that sears and startles. John heard of Jesus and wondered. And his friends ask Jesus, "Are you the one to come?" Look around. We know if our God is with us by the signs: healing, openness, conversion, freedom, the outcast are welcomed home, people dead in despair and misery are given life, and the good news is preached to the poor of the world. It is Advent and when we hear the words of John and Jesus it is time for us to take up the cry and the announcement and be the words of proclamation and the presence of Good News to the poor of the world that cry out for peace upon the earth. If we are the least, we had best start making Jesus' words come true in our world and have the effect that John had in our day and place.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications) & http://www.claretphilippines.org (Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines)



Vice President and Country General Manager Marife Zamora addresses the guests of Convergys' 'Partnership Appreciation Night'

Marife Zamora (fourth from left) poses with some of the awardees during Convergys 'Partnership Appreciation Night'. Also included in the photo are Director of Human Resources Operations (second from right) Anna Villamor and Sourcing Manager Ramil Dela Cruz (far right).

GIVINGBACK:

Convergys recognizes its vendors through its 'Partnership Appreciation Night'

Convergys Corporation in the Philippines recently held its first Partnership Appreciation Night to recognize its valued partners, vendors and suppliers from the educational institutions and business and technology communities – all of which have played integral roles in ensuring the success of Convergys' shared customers.

The Partnership Appreciation Night is the [illegible] of Convergys [illegible] in the contact center industry in the Philippines. With [illegible] the global market [illegible] the forefront of this [illegible] and has truly become an undisputed leader in the industry.

Part of Convergys' success is the result of [illegible] with its partners.

Through the Partnership Appreciation Night, Convergys gathered institutions and organizations with which it has built positive rapport with and duly recognized them for the contributions they've made to the success of Convergys.

As a result, the event was graced with representatives from different sectors and industries [illegible] strong bond [illegible] developed with Convergys. The event was highlighted with the recognition of the company's top performing partners with a presentation of plaques of appreciation by Marife Zamora, Vice President and Country General Manager; Anna Villamor, Senior Director for Human Resources; and Ramil Dela Cruz, Sourcing Manager.

In addition to the partners that received plaques of appreciation from Convergys, five (5) companies were given trophies of appreciation for being instrumental in helping strengthen Convergys' operations in the Philippines: Tele Development, Staffright Solutions, Excel Asia, Jobstreet Select and Mirdc.

"As Convergys continues to be a leader in the industry, [illegible] our partners [illegible] our company," [illegible] Zamora. "Convergys' success [illegible] without the support of our partners and [illegible] for Convergys, [illegible] with our partners [illegible] there with us from the start."

Four years ago, the company [illegible] employees [illegible] dedication and [illegible] more than 11,000 employees in eight call centers [illegible] the company [illegible] which will be opening in Bacolod in the first quarter of 2010.

The company also embarked on a comprehensive expansion program [illegible] the company intends [illegible] through [illegible] people, technology [illegible] relationship with its partners.

"The real [illegible] we have established with our partners has given us a uniquely broad perspective on the Philippine market," says Zamora. "To continue to stay innovative and deliver the best possible customer solutions, [illegible] the best industry suppliers and [illegible] at the forefront of the contact center industry."

THE TOP FIVE VENDORS: The company's [illegible] Top Sourcing Vendors, namely:

- Tele Development
- Staffright Solutions
- Excel Asia
- Jobstreet Select
- Mirdc

Country Manager Marife Zamora strikes a pose with Sa Aklat Sisikat's Lizzie Zobel.

Vice President and Country General Manager Marife Zamora addresses the guests at Convergys' Partnership Appreciation Night

Marife Zamora (fourth from left) poses with some of the awardees during Convergys' Partnership Appreciation Night. Also included in the photo are Director of Human Resources Operations (second from right) Anna Villamor and Sourcing Manager Ramil Dela Cruz (far right).

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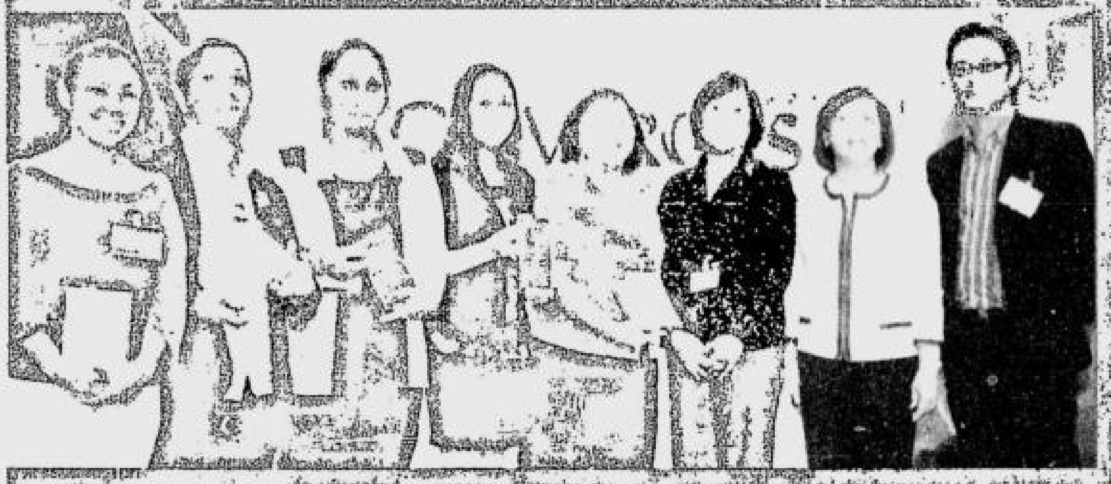


The Partnership Appreciation Night [illegible] Philippines [illegible] truly become an undisputed leader in the industry.

[illegible] Convergys [illegible]

Through the Partnership Appreciation Night, Convergys [illegible] the contributions [illegible]

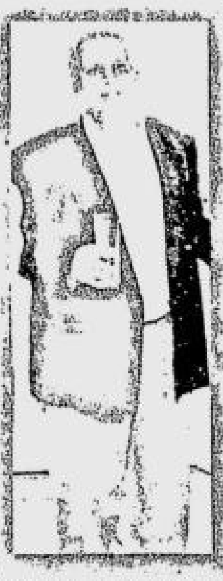
[illegible] Marife Zamora [illegible] General Manager Anna Villamor, Senior Director of Human Resources [illegible] Dela Cruz, Sourcing Manager.

In addition to the partners that [illegible] appreciation from Convergys [illegible] companies were given [illegible] appreciation for being instrumental [illegible] the Philippines [illegible] Infinit Solutions, Excel Asia [illegible]

At Convergys [illegible] the industry, we recognize the importance [illegible] our partners [illegible] our company," says Zamora. [illegible]

[illegible]

THE TOP FIVE VENDORS [illegible] were named [illegible] Top Sourcing Vendors [illegible] Development Staffing Solutions, Excel Asia, Jobstreet [illegible]



Country Manager Marife Zamora (right) poses with [illegible] Lizzie Zobel

Bells of Diliman ring again on Dec. 18

From page A1

year, to restore the Carillon and make it sing again," said Ponciano Rivera, president of the UP Alumni Association (UPAA).

A brainchild of National Artist for Architecture Juan Nakpil, UP Music Conservatory director Ramon Tapales and then UP president Bienvenido Gonzales, the bell tower was donated to the university in 1952 as a gift from the UPAA.

48 original bells

The 48 original bells, worth P200,000 at the time, were forged by the now defunct Van Bergen Co. in the Netherlands, with the largest bell weighing five tons. The bells were played using a clavier or wooden keyboard.

UP oldtimers and former students have fond memories of the Carillon which was played twice every day—once in the morning and again in the late afternoon.

Rufina Jorge, cochair of the restoration project, said the wind would carry the sound of the bells all the way to Cubao.

"Dormers were often awakened by the national anthem and the UP Hymn in the mornings," Jorge said in an interview.

But years of hot and cold weather, dust and neglect left the bells out of tune and out of commission.

Last time

Rivera said the last time the bells were played was during the 1988 Lantern Parade—a medley of the national anthem, UP Naming Mahal and Push On UP, the school cheer.

But as late as 2001, according to some students, they would hear nursery rhymes such as "London Bridge" and "Sing a Song of Six Pence" coming from the bell tower—albeit in a slower tempo and the chimes, faint.

In June 2005, the UPAA launched a restoration project for the Carillon in time for the 2008 university centennial.

Then UPAA president Jaime de los Santos was at the forefront of the ambitious move to replace the 48 bells which were covered in black dust and soot, some of them rusty and cracked.

Eight months ago, the alumni association purchased 36 new bells and a new wooden clavier from a Dutch company, Petit and Fritsen for P12 million.

Royal Bells Philippines engineer Matthew Bergers, the designer and technical drawer of the Carillon Project, said the new bells are made of 80 percent bronze and 20 percent zinc, phosphor and magnesium, according to a press statement from UP Communication students Mark Dantes and Kristine Servando.

Bergers, who accompanied the bells to the Philippines, said the largest bell weighs 635 kg and the smallest weighs 14 kg.

Amphitheater in Carillon Plaza

The UPAA is also set to raise funds for a small amphitheater near the bell tower, to be named Carillon Plaza. Rivera said they hope to finish it before the university centennial ends.

Repairs on the 130-foot tower would be shouldered by Antonio and Ching Evangelista, who pledged P3 million to P5 million to refurbish the paint and fixtures.

UP alumni in the country and abroad, in particular the United States, pitched in to raise some P14 million in cash and pledges, Rivera said.

Among the prominent donors were former Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., Loida Nicolas-Lewis, Justice Minerva Gonzaga-Reyes, San Miguel Corp. and Smart Telecommunications.

The new bells were blessed on Dec. 4 in simple rites at the Carillon while the old set of bells was taken down to be cleaned.

"We will set up a display area for them at the University Theater. In fact, we were able to leave them outside the Carillon for a few days without anyone attempting to steal them. The bells are heavy, even for thieves," Rivera said.

Scraped and polished

Eleven of the small bells were scraped clean and polished so they could be played again outside the tower.

Unlike the old set of 48, which covers 4 octaves, the 36 new bells reach only up to three octaves.

But Royal Bells Philippines engineer Eduardo Otacan, who is part of the team that installed the new set and would be maintaining them, said the clavier has 12 more settings in case additional bells are bought.

"Now, we don't only have a wooden clavier for the bells, but we have a keyboard with a computer attached to it—as a back-up to the clavier," Otacan said.

The new bells glistened in the early morning sun as technicians played sample melodies to fine-tune it in time for Tuesday's opening.

Repertoire

Otacan said the Dutch supplier had installed some pre-programmed songs in the computer, which could be played at the push of a button.

The sample melodies include pop classics like "Imagine," "Yesterday," "Let It Be," "Love Me Tender" and "My Funny Valentine," as well as Christmas tunes like "Auld Lang Syne" and "We Wish You A Merry Christmas."

The repertoire also features Filipino songs such as "Bayan Ko" and "Lupang Hinirang."

"We also plan to program newer songs so students can ask the carillonneur to play their requests, say, on Valentine's Day," Otacan said.

A carillonneur, according to Jorge, is especially trained in playing the wooden clavier, which is connected to the 36 bells through its stainless steel cables, levers and foot pedals.

Among the notable carillonneurs in past decades were composer and conductor Jerry Dadap, Antonio Regalario, Tony Maige and Rey Lauron.

But not everybody can be a carillonneur, as it takes physical as well as musical prowess to tinker with the levers, using the right tempo and rhythm.

Who would play the bells?

One of the concerns of the UPAA is who will be tasked to play the bells and the clavier once the alumni association turns over the Carillon on Dec. 18.

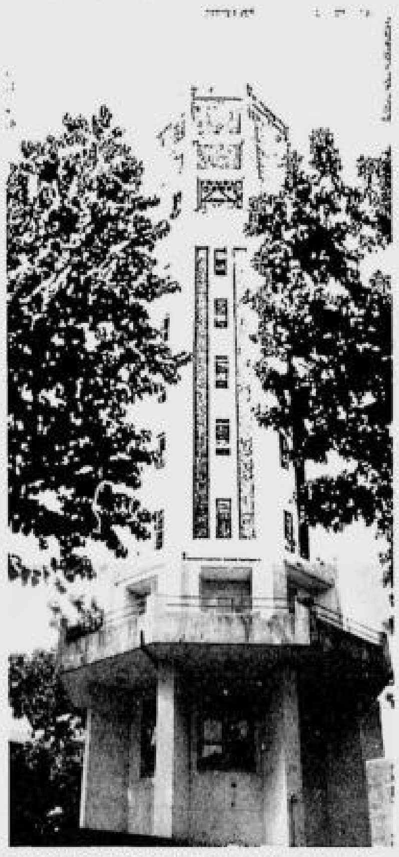
"There's no definite plan as to who will play it after we turn it over to the UP administration," Jorge said.

Rivera said a trust fund for the training of carillonneurs, as well as the maintenance of the Carillon, was being worked out by the UPAA.

Another concern is the maintenance of the newly-refurbished Carillon.

Royal Bells Philippines has offered to clean and check the bells for two years, free of charge, but Jorge said they would have to ink a memorandum of agreement with UP on the upkeep of the bells.

"We're very concerned about the upkeep of the bells, we want to ensure that someone will take care of the bells regularly so that they won't fall into ruin again," Jorge said.



FIRST OF ITS KIND IN ASIA: The UP Carillon, silent for 19 years will ring again at its inauguration on Dec. 18 with Christmas carols for its repertoire. Now made up of 36 bells from Holland, the Carillon was a P14-M revival project. JOAN BONDOC

Mini Christmas Village lights up eyes …

From page A1

San Juan Street in Bacolod City has grown in size with 3,000 miniature objects.

Tonogbanua said that when he was little, he was fascinated by the snow-covered Victorian and New England villages on Christmas cards.

This led to his life-long collection of miniature buildings, ornaments and people figures that he has used to recreate scenes from the Christmas cards of his childhood days.

Obsession

"My collection became an obsession. I kept saying I would stop but every time I went abroad, especially to visit my sister Thelma in New York, I would buy more miniature objects," he said.

Tonogbanua, a lover of the arts, said that at one time, he gave up a ticket to a Broadway show in exchange for two miniature houses.

His collection grew in size and in 1996, he started his Christmas Village. At first it covered an area of 32 sq.ft. But every year, he added more objects and the village grew. Friends and strangers, pleased with what they saw, also contributed to its growth.

Here are some scenes from Tonogbanua's Christmas Village: Cable cars glide up and down the mountains. Skiers prepare to slide down the slopes. A rescue helicopter and Santa on his sleigh hover above. Trains run on tracks and through tunnels.

Eye for detail

Fiber optic lights simulate flowing water. A carousel spins. Traffic lights blink. Fountains spew water in village squares.

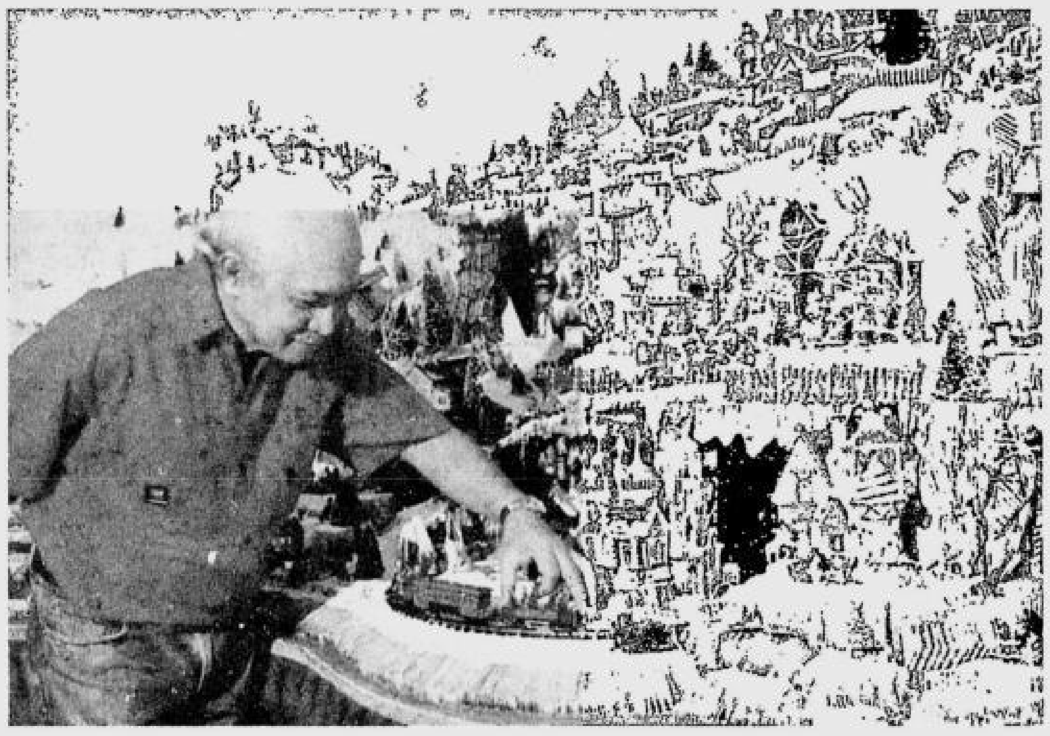
Skaters glide on a frozen pond. Villagers gather around a bonfire. Victorian figures dance in a brightly lit gazebo. Churchgoers gather in front of a church.

Biggest joy

Tonogbanua, who has an eye for detail, used earrings for chandeliers. Tiny paintings adorn the walls of a Victorian house.

His biggest joy, he said, was to see the sparkle in the eyes of the children who come to view the village. The happiness on their faces makes it all worthwhile.

Tonogbanua's Christmas Village is open to the public throughout December from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. On busy nights, about 300 people come to gaze at the village which is a delight to behold for the young and old.



THE MAN WHO MADE HIS FANTASY COME TRUE: Bamboo Tonogbanua adjusts a wayward coach of the train in his miniature Christmas village. Now on its 13th year, the village has 3,000 objects, including skaters, caves and cable cars that glide up and down a 10-foot high snow-covered mountain. The tableau comes complete with a village square. PHILIP LOYOLA/CONTRIBUTOR

Music, history and hearts converge in ancient church

From page A1

song, "The Work of Christmas," which expressed a formidable task: "Feed the hungry, bring peace among brothers..."

Lest the night end on too serious a note, the singers began swaying to "A Christmas Praise," a more upbeat number that allowed the group to do brisk hand claps and various movements to illustrate the many things one can do with outstretched hands—which sounds more touching in the Filipino *"bukas-palad."*

Partnership

"A few months ago, the head of our group, Butch Duque, was surfing the Internet and came across the BP website," recounted Boboy Rivera, a member of the 5 P.M. Choir, one of eight singing groups in the church.

The choir had been thinking of ways to raise funds for the renovation of the church and hit on the idea of inviting the BP to do a concert.

The church, built in 1620 under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Pedro Montes, originally sat on a property named Macati that the Spanish encomienda system had turned over to Capitan Pedro de Brito, a retired aide to the Spanish army chief. He and his wife, Ana de Herrera, executed a writ in which half of their landholdings in Macati were bequeathed to the Society of Jesus congregation.

Our Lady of the Rose

One of the conditions was the establishment of a novitiate and church that were to be placed under the patronage of Saint Peter. The arrival of the image of Nuestra Señora de la Rosa (Our Lady of the Rose) from Acapulco in 1718 encouraged the parishioners to keep a Marian devotion.

Through the years, generations of parishioners have helped keep the church's structure and interiors well-maintained. But some of its surrounding areas need to be refurbished to preserve the architectural landmark.

BP representatives welcomed the idea for a concert and offered to sing for free. As a warm-up, the group sang at the 5 p.m. Mass on Sept. 23.

Associated with Ateneo

The BP has been closely associated with the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila University as two of its founders, Norman Agatep and Manoling Francisco, met at the Loyola Heights campus. The group's involvement in shows for a cause is very much in keeping with the philosophy of the Jesuits' founder St. Ignatius Loyola—"being men for others."

Even more fitting, Bukas Palad was lending its hand for the benefit of a church in a town which was once the Jesuits' sphere of influence during the Spanish colonial period.

Splendor of 'retablo'

At the concert, the mute splendor of the church's multi-tiered "retablo" (altar frame) provided an elegant backdrop as Bukas Palad opened with one of its signature hymns, "I Will Sing Forever."

The group, composed of 18 members for this show and backed by conductor Francisco Palan on keyboards and Agatep on percussion, was garbed splendidly as well—tuxedo-cut barong for the men, and modern, stylized Maria Clara for the women, made of Chinese silk and designed by Bukas Palad tenor Ali Figueroa.

But the fashionable costumes did not at all hamper the group's energetic movements and stirring rendition of traditional English Yuletide carols and original material written by its own members.

Coming back for more

"Angels We Have Heard on High," rendered a cappella to spine-tingling effect as the chorus reached its climax; "Emanuel," sung in Tagalog, eloquently conveyed its meaning, *"Nasa Atin Ang Diyos"* ("God Is With Us."); "Gumising" expressed the hopeful act of waking in the morning to welcome Advent; and the melody of another Filipino composition, "Himig ng Hangin," was enhanced by the distinctly Christmasy sound of chimes as played by Agatep.

Organizers said renovation work on the church, including converting the St. Therese chapel into a baptismal font and refurbishing the sacristy, refectory and parish hall, would amount to millions of pesos.

The well-attended concert started the ball rolling by raising the seed money. And from all indications, the audience would not mind coming back for more.

Swimmer Molina is MVP, gives luster …

From page A1

tor to the meager medal harvest for the dethroned champions.

The Philippines, the overall champion in Manila two years ago, finished in sixth place with a lean harvest of 41 gold, 91 silver and 96 bronze medals, way behind the 183-123-102 effort of Thailand. Also finishing ahead of the Filipinos in the gold count were Malaysia (67), Vietnam (64), Indonesia (56) and Singapore (43) *(Related stories in Sports section.)*

"It's an honor for the association for its athlete to be bestowed such an honor," Mark Joseph, president of the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association (Pasa), told the INQUIRER over the phone from Bangkok.

"This just goes to show that the Filipino does not lack the genetics to succeed, even in such a high-caliber event such as the SEA Games," Joseph, also the deputy secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee, added.

"With proper funding and given the right program, we can truly succeed."

Only 3rd Filipino

The 23-year-old Molina became only the third Filipino—and the third swimmer—to accomplish the feat, after Eric Buhain in the 1991 Games in Manila and Akiko Thomson in 1989 in Malaysia.

Buhain, now chair of the Games and Amusements Board, won a total of seven gold medals in 1991, including one in the relay, while Thomson was the winner of five.

For the achievement, Molina, an international relations graduate from the University of California at Berkeley, won $10,000 to go with the foot-and-a-half tall crystal trophy which he was not around to receive, having left for the United States after the pool events.

Natthanan Chankrachiang of Thailand was the MVP for women and received her prize from Prime Minister Gen. Surayud Jullanont during the elaborate closing ceremonies at His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary Stadium here.

Humble guy

"The Pasa is really glad for Molina because he is such a humble guy," Joseph said, as he tried to contact Molina to relay the good news.

Molina first became a national athlete in the 2002 Asian Games in Busan, South Korea, and won his first two golds for the Philippines in the Vietnam SEA Games the following year. He also went to the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

In 2005, he won three more gold medals and a silver in individual action, and a bronze in the relay, which he easily surpassed with a 4-1-1 (gold-silver-bronze) effort this time.

Last week, Molina first won the 400-meter individual medley in 4 minutes and 28.85 seconds, the 200 IM in 2:05.50 and 200 breaststroke in 2:18.11.

Total of 8 golds for swimming

Joined by two gold medal-winner Ryan Arabejo, 200 butterfly champion JB Walsh and the fastest swimmer of them all in these Games, Daniel Coakley, Molina took the fourth gold in the relay to clinch his fourth gold medal.

Swimming won a total of eight gold medals and became the biggest source of championships for the Philippines.

RP, 5 nations agree to conserve Coral Triangle

By Cynthia D. Balana

SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM six countries, including the Philippines, that met in Bali, Indonesia, last week, have agreed to cooperate on a Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) to further conserve marine resources.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, in a statement issued yesterday, said the CTI calls for the multilateral management of marine and coastal resources in an area encompassing parts of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands.

The CTI consensus was forged on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference on Dec. 6-7.

Observers from the World Wide Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, and other experts also participated in the CTI consensus.

The Indonesia-led initiative hopes to draw greater international attention to the impact of climate change on marine and coastal ecosystems.

Leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) had endorsed the CTI during its summit in Sydney in September.

The senior officials' meeting was held in Bali to discuss ways and means of concretizing cooperation activities, and to develop a comprehensive plan of action for the CTI.

A second CTI-Senior Officials Meeting to be hosted by the Philippines in 2008 will endorse the action plan for approval by ministers of the six countries in October 2008.

Manado in 2009

The final CTI-Plan of Action will then be presented for affirmation to heads of state at the World Oceans Conference in Manado in May 2009.

Five initial CTI goals have been identified:

- Designation and effective management of priority seascapes
- Application of an ecosystem approach to the management of fisheries and other marine resources
- Establishment and effective management of marine protected areas (MPAs)
- Achievement of climate change adaptation measures
- Improvement of threatened species status

Effective assessment

The officials said that in implementing the CTI, elements such as effective assessment, monitoring and information management; sustainable financing; capacity building; public and private partnerships, and enabling laws and policies should be put firmly in place.

On Dec. 10, 2007, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono held informal discussions with the heads of delegation attending the Climate Change Conference.

Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, who headed the country's delegation to the Bali conference, and Philippine Ambassador to Indonesia Vidal Querol expressed Philippine support for the CTI.

According to Atienza, the Philippines strongly supported the CTI because it would enhance the country's own marine conservation efforts and complement ongoing initiatives under the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregional Program undertaken jointly with Indonesia and Malaysia.

He said the sustainable management of these resources would greatly benefit coastal communities.

MEDICard - Alcatel·Lucent MOA - Signing

ALCATEL-LUCENT PHILIPPINES recently signed its renewal healthcare agreement with MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC. (seated L-R) MEDICard's Luis S. Montoya (EVP & GM) and Dr. Nicanor D. Montoya (President) with Alcatel's Nicolaas Frederik Oreel (Managing Director & CSO) and Lorna Sorilla (HR Director). (standing L-R) MEDICard's Dr. Nicky S. Montoya (Medical Director), Joan Sabater (Assistant Manager – Sales & Business Dev't. Group) and Maricel Torres (Sr. Manager – SBDG) with Alcatel's Nilda Toledo (Finance Manager & County Officer), Joy Panes (HR Officer) and MEDICard's Reynalin Ferranco (Assistant Supervisor – SBDG).

Actor Ace Vergel dead at 55

VETERAN ACTOR Ace Vergel, the original "Bad Boy of Philippine Movies," died before dawn yesterday after suffering a heart attack. He was 55.

Vergel—real name Ace York Aguilar—died at 3:18 a.m. at Chinese General Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

A nurse, who refused to be named because she was not authorized to speak, said the actor was rushed to the hospital on Friday night.

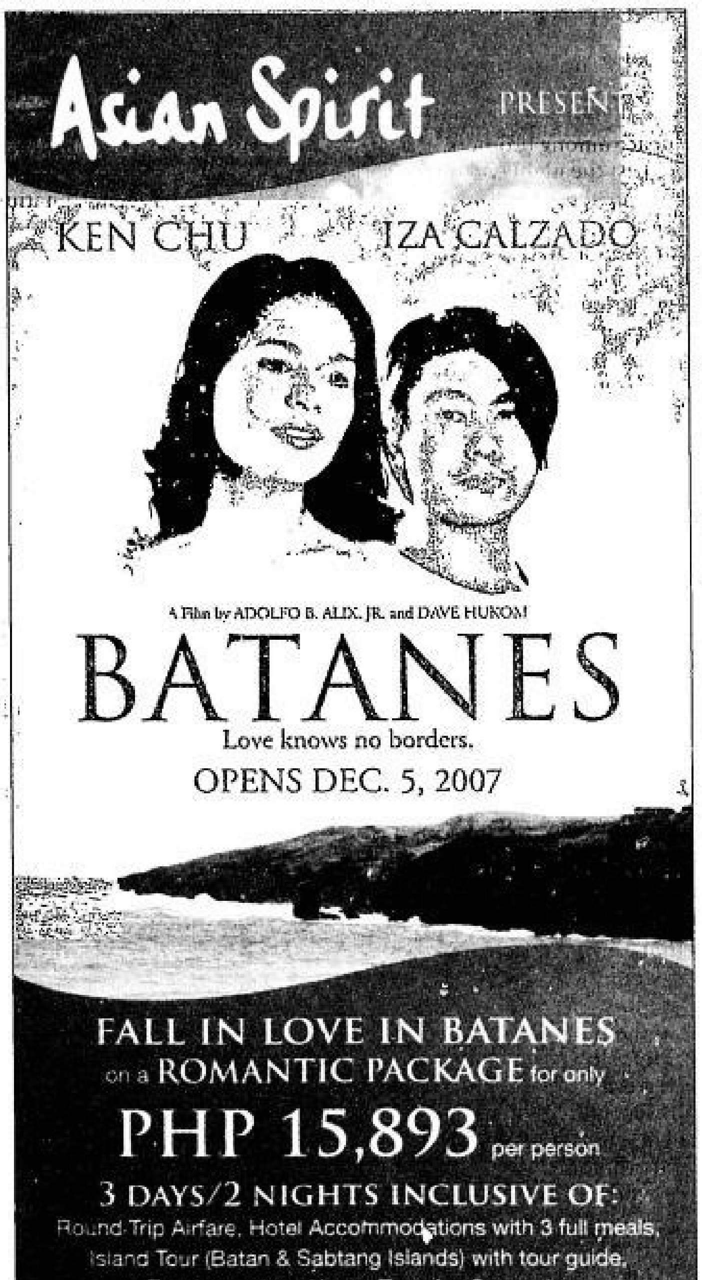
A popular action star during the 1980s, Vergel was dubbed the "bad boy" of Philippine cinema for his on-screen persona of a tough guy antihero, as well as his numerous brushes with the law in real life.

The actor's last legal encounter occurred in August when police served him with an arrest warrant for rape.

He was released after police learned the warrant had been lifted.

Vergel, who was also arrested several times for illegal drug use, belonged to a family of actors. He was the son of Cesar Ramirez and Alicia Vergel and the brother of Beverly Vergel.

Tina G. Santos



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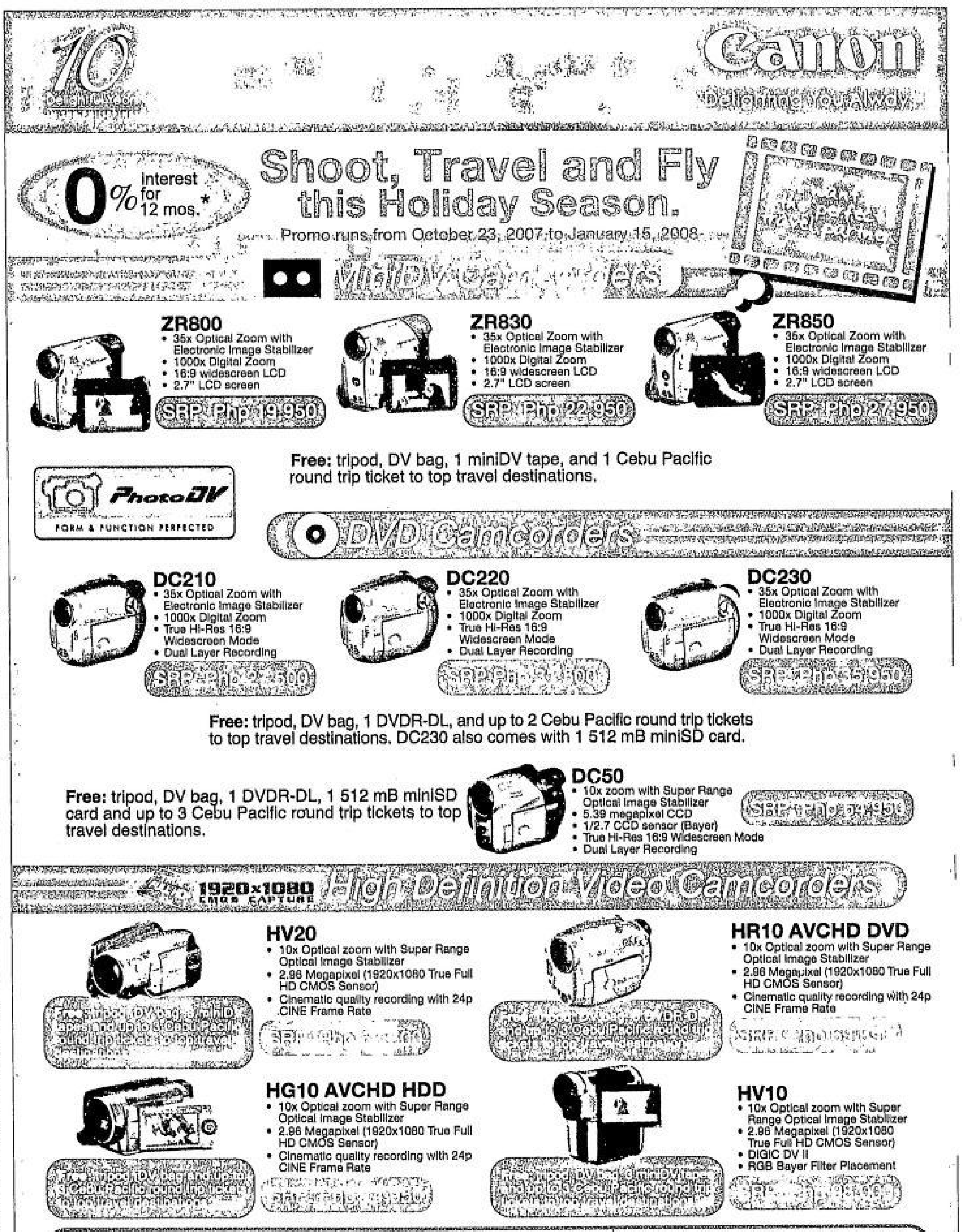

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- 2.96 Megapixel (1920x1080 True Full HD CMOS Sensor)
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AT THE END OF THE DAY: After the disputations, discussions and emotional outbursts of the past two weeks, with the last day lasting well into the night, the UN Climate Change Conference in Nusa Dua, Bali, comes to a close with an address from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Saturday. AP

AT A GLANCE

THESE ARE THE KEY POINTS OF THE final decision at the United Nations climate change conference in Bali, which set an agenda for talks on a new global warming pact to succeed the Kyoto Protocol at the end of 2012:

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

It recognizes that "deep cuts" in global emissions will be required to prevent dangerous human interference in the climate.

It references scientific reports that suggest a range of cuts between 25 and 40 percent by 2020, but prescribes no such targets itself.

DEADLINE

Negotiations for the next climate accord should last for two years and conclude in 2009 in order to allow enough time to implement it at the end of 2012.

Four major climate meetings will take place next year.

RICH AND POOR

Negotiators should consider binding reductions of gas emissions by industrialized countries, while developing countries should consider moves to control the growth of their emissions.

Richer countries should work to transfer climate-friendly technology to poorer nations.

ADJUSTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Negotiators should look at supporting urgent steps to help poorer countries adapt to inevitable effects of global warming, such as building seawalls to guard against rising oceans.

DEFORESTATION

Negotiators should consider "positive incentives" for reducing deforestation in developing countries, many of which are seeking international compensation for preserving their forest "sinks" absorbing carbon dioxide. *AP*

Small countries like RP must play bigger roles

By Daxim L. Lucas

SMALL COUNTRIES LIKE THE Philippines should play a greater role in the global effort to save the environment despite their relative lack of economic clout, according to a record-breaking adventurer and environmentalist.

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER, round-the-world balloonist Bertrand Piccard said Filipinos could contribute to averting climate change through their daily acts, which, if combined with those of citizens of other small nations, would be sufficient to make a global impact.

"I also come from a small country, which is Switzerland," he said. "If we [from small countries] always wait for the big players to change something, nothing will happen."

Piccard is spearheading a project that aims to fly a solar-powered airplane nonstop around the world as part of his environmental campaign.

He spoke on the issue as part of the CNN Future Summit initiative, "Saving Planet Earth," which was held in Singapore last week.

Doing what we can

On March 21, 1999, Piccard completed a nonstop circumnavigation of the globe on a balloon named the Breitling Orbiter. He was airborne for almost 20 days.

In the interview, Piccard ticked off basic, but often overlooked, recommendations that Filipinos could use to make their voice heard in the global environmental debate:

"We have to do what we can. We have to change our behavior. We have to reduce consumption. We have to use hybrid engines in our cars. We have to insulate our houses much better. We have to shut down the lights when we are not in the room.

"All these are done by individuals," he pointed out.

Earlier this year, a report by 600 scientists from 40 countries concluded that the global climate was warming and that the release of greenhouse gases from the burning of fossil fuels was causing longer droughts, more flood-causing downpours and worse heat waves.

Australia's example

Piccard said citizens around the world could also make their opinions heard by electing public officials with a clear interest in protecting the environment.

"It's a beautiful example that Australia has shown," he said, referring to the election of that country's new prime minister, Kevin Rudd. "It shows what difference can be made by just one man. You change the prime minister and you have a completely different policy."

Last week, Rudd signed the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, reversing the 10-year-old policy of his predecessor, John Howard. The pact commits industrialized nations to cut greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

Australia is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases on a per capita basis.

"This shows how important it is to elect the correct people," Piccard said.

Turnaround after US election

Piccard expressed optimism that the tide would turn in favor of the pro-environment lobby in the near future, after Americans elect a new set of national leaders next year.

"I'm convinced that very soon, they will make a complete turnaround. And they will see all the opportunities that new technology and new energy sources are going to give for the economy," he said, adding:

"The moment the US understands that sustainable development is an economic opportunity rather than an economic threat, they're going to make this turnaround. They're going to lead the way."

Piccard will elaborate on his views in the CNN Future Summit program hosted by Richard Quest. It will be aired over CNN starting on Dec. 18 until Jan. 2.

US backs down in Bali; more talks ahead to replace Kyoto Protocol

From page A1

he told The Associated Press.

He also told Reuters that "all the 188 countries have recognized that this is the defining agenda for all humanity, for all of Planet Earth."

Setting an agenda

The document, adopted after contentious all-night talks, does not commit countries to specific actions against global warming.

It was limited to setting an agenda and schedule for negotiators to find ways to reduce pollution and help poor countries adapt to environmental changes by speeding up the transfer of technology and financial assistance.

Adoption came after marathon negotiations that appeared on the brink of collapse several times.

European and US envoys dueled into the final hours of the two-week conference over the European Union's proposal that the Bali mandate suggest an ambitious goal for cutting industrial nations' emissions—by 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.

The EU and others said the goals were needed to direct upcoming talks. But the guidelines were eliminated after the United States, joined by Japan and others, argued that targets should come at the end of the two-year negotiations, not the beginning.

An indirect reference was inserted as a footnote instead.

Just when it appeared agreement was within reach yesterday morning, developing nations argued that their need for technological help from rich nations and other issues needed greater recognition in the document.

In an apparent resolution, India and others suggested minor adjustments to the text, backed by the EU, that encouraged monitoring of technological transfer to make sure rich countries were meeting that need.

But the United States objected, calling for further talks, and only relented when, in an uproar, delegates by turns criticized and pleaded with Dobriansky to reverse course.

"We would like to beg them," appealed Uganda's environment minister, Jesca Eriyo.

Applause

Dobriansky's subsequent acceptance of the changes triggered applause—one of the few times that a US action had won public praise at a conference studded with accusations that Washington was blocking progress.

She told reporters after the adoption that the appeals had convinced the US delegation that developing nations did not intend to dilute their commitment to take steps to stop global warming.

"After hearing the comments ... we were assured by their words to act," Dobriansky said. "So with that, we felt it was important that we go forward."

At one point, China also angrily accused the UN of pressuring nations to sign off on the text, even as sideline negotiations continued—triggering an emotional spat that ended when a tearful and exhausted UN climate chief Yvo de Boer was escorted out of the hall.

The EU later said it was satisfied with the deal, seeing as key the inclusion of the United States.

"It was exactly what we wanted; we are indeed very pleased," said EU chief negotiator Humberto Rosa. "We will have now two tremendously demanding years, starting right in January."

Cheers, jeers

Participants and environmentalists hailed the final agreement.

Still, some critics complained that the document lacked specific greenhouse gas cuts for industrialized nations, and did not include strong commitments for rich countries to provide poorer ones with green technology.

Critics of the United States cheered the reversal.

"We have learned a historical lesson: If you expose to the world the dealings of the United States, they will ultimately back down," said Hans Verolme, director of WWF's Global Climate Change Program.

For developing countries, the final document instructs negotiators to consider incentives and other means to encourage poorer nations to curb—voluntarily—growth in their emissions. The explosion of greenhouse emissions in China, India and other developing countries potentially could negate cutbacks in the developed world.

The roadmap is intended to lead to a more inclusive, effective successor to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which commits 37 industrialized nations to cut greenhouse gases by an average of 5 percent between 2008 and 2012.

That pact, however, has been rejected by the United States, the largest producer of such gases, seriously weakening a punch that scientists agree was already too little to have an impact on the environment.

US President George W. Bush has argued that the required gas cuts would hurt the economy, and he opposed the lack of cuts imposed on China and other emerging economies.

Critics—including former US Vice President Al Gore, who spoke at the conference on Thursday—accused Washington of stonewalling progress at Bali. But many pointed out that with Bush's departure from office in early 2009, chances were high that the next US president would be much more supportive of ambitious cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. *Reports from AP, Reuters*

JDV III, fiancee back off from Dec. 20 date; reset wedding

From page A1

wedding was scheduled on Dec. 20.

Subsequently, the members of the wedding entourage were chosen, the venue was set and the invitations were sent.

But alas for this man who rocked the Arroyo administration with explosive testimony on the purported involvement of big names in the since canceled National Broadband Network (NBN) deal, some things can get in the way of a carefully planned wedding.

With death threats still coming his way, the latest only a few days ago, De Venecia and his fiancee decided last week that the merry month of December was not the best time for them to tie the knot.

De Venecia said he was concerned for the safety of his fiancee and her family, and even requested that her full name not be mentioned in this story.

Maybe next year

"We decided to postpone our wedding to a later date because of everything that's going on during the holidays. Maybe next year would be a more convenient time and, hopefully, politically not too noisy," De Venecia said in an interview with the INQUIRER at the Peninsula Manila, where he took a brief respite from a forum on his advocacy against the Philippines' foreign debt problem, to share details of his private life.

The man stirred a new crisis for President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration in September, when he blew the whistle on the $329-million NBN deal awarded to China's ZTE Corp., which he said was overpriced by $130 million.

The founder of Amsterdam Holdings Inc., which had been sidelined in the deal, De Venecia accused then Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos of inappropriate involvement in the enterprise and offering him $10 million to withdraw.

He also testified that the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, had thrust a finger in his face and barked at him to "back off."

Abalos quit his post on Oct. 1, days after Romulo Neri, the former National Economic and Development Authority chief, also testified at the Senate that Abalos had tried to bribe him with P200 million to approve the ZTE contract.

According to De Venecia, he and his fiancee decided to marry this month despite the controversy he generated with his exposé.

"I thought that by Dec. 20, the [Senate] hearings would be over," he said. But after several hearings, the Senate decided to defer the inquiry until it had approved the 2008 national budget.

Then last week, strangers were seen in front of his house taking pictures. (Only last month, De Venecia filed a police report on death threats supposedly coming from the camp of Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, whose department was the implementing agency of the ZTE-NBN contract. Mendoza has vehemently denied making any threats.)

Private people

"My fiancee and her family are very private, and they didn't really want to be exposed to the public eye. I didn't feel comfortable. And, secondly, of course when there's a death threat to me, they will inevitably be affected. So with all these things, maybe it's better [to have the wedding] later," he said.

Then there was the problem of logistics, De Venecia said.

The couple had planned a simple wedding with no more than 200 guests. But the Speaker and his wife Gina had invited their many friends to the wedding, prompting a search for a bigger venue.

In fact, the wedding as planned is rather low-key.

There are only four pairs of sponsors, only one (Senate President Manuel Villar) of whom is a politician—which, De Venecia said, was at his father's instance.

No jitters

The others are San Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang, De Venecia's business partners Hany Salaam of Gulf Regal Corp. and Seiichi Wada, Carmen Bautista, former Transportation Undersecretary Josefina Lichauco, SM Investments Corp. vice chair Teresita Sy-Coson and former Ambassador to the Court of St. James's Isabel Wilson.

De Venecia joked that he and his fiancee were no longer prey to wedding jitters, each having been married once before.

"This is our second marriage. *Alam na namin 'to* (We know the drill)," he said, laughing. "I'm more nervous about other things, about how hard I have to work after this wedding."

They met 12 years ago, just a few months after he separated from his wife of four years, with whom he has a son, Jose Jaime. The 15-year-old will serve as best man at the wedding, along with the Speaker.

The bride-to-be's first marriage, which produced two children, has also been annulled.

The scene of their first meeting was a dinner arranged by mutual friends, a couple playing matchmaker to the two young entrepreneurs.

Sparks didn't fly at first, or so De Venecia thought.

"She's a wonderful woman, but I wasn't really focused then because I had just been separated," he recalled.

Then two years ago, the same couple again invited De Venecia to their house for dinner. He remembered that the last time he was there, Karen was around.

"How's Karen these days?" he asked. A week later, he had her cell phone number.

He sent this rather straightforward text message: "Do you mind going out with me on a date?" He said he had deliberately asked for a date because she might think he would sell her bandwidth.

'Get off the phone'

"I finally proposed to her last April 1. I didn't mean it to be [on April Fools' Day]," De Venecia said.

Three weeks later, she was in a conference call with her business partners when he came to her house.

"I told her to get off the phone because I wanted to tell her something," he recalled. "I told her I wanted to be her husband, the father of her children. Then I gave her the ring."

But why Dec. 20 for their altar date? Simple: His first wedding was held on a Dec. 21, and hers on a Dec. 22.

No new date has been set for the wedding, but De Venecia is sure that this is one event where no one can tell him to back off.

Biofuels eating into food security – Golez

AN OPPOSITION congressman has asked three House committees to look into the reported adverse effects on the country's food security of a recently-passed law mandating the use of biofuels as an energy source.

Senior Deputy Minority Leader Roilo Golez said the worldwide biofuels program has generated a "food versus fuel" debate since the setting aside of more land for planting biofuel crops has affected food production.

"It could even cause a rise in beer prices," Golez said in a statement after he filed House Resolution No. 376.

Golez said the biofuels program affected the beer industry in the US when the barley growing area was cut as a result of the need for biofuels, "thus increasing the price of barley which is a very important ingredient in beer making."

Inquiry

The resolution aims to direct the House committees on ecology, on energy, and on agriculture and food "to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the current biofuels program and review its impact on energy security, carbon emissions, global warming and food security."

"Since Republic Act No. 9367, or the Biofuels Act of 2006, was enacted on Jan. 12, 2007, there have been some very critical findings by noted scientists that necessitate an urgent review of the country's biofuels policy," Golez said.

He said that in October 2007, global warming expert Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen said the advantages of reduced carbon dioxide emissions were more than offset by the increased nitrous oxide emissions from biofuels.

Nitrous oxide, he said, is considered to be both a potent greenhouse gas and a destroyer of the ozone layer.

Catastrophic

Golez said that Jean Ziegler, the United Nations special rapporteur on food, concluded that while the argument for biofuels in terms of energy efficiency and climate change was legitimate, the effects on world hunger of transforming wheat and maize crops into biofuel "are absolutely catastrophic."

The biofuels law mandates the use of such renewable sources of energy as ethanol in transportation and industry. Such biofuels are sourced from certain crops that are also promoted by the biofuels program. *Norman Bordadora*

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Remains of Pinoy UN exec killed in Algiers blast home soon

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN Affairs is working for the repatriation of the body of the Filipino woman killed in the Dec. 11 bombing of a United Nations office in Algeria, Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Esteban Conejos said yesterday.

Interviewed by Vice President Noli de Castro on the latter's radio program, "Para sa Iyo, Bayan," Conejos said the Philippine Embassy in Libya, which is nearest to Algeria, was coordinating with the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), where Gene Luna worked, for the return of her body.

Luna, 48, was among the fatalities in the attack on the building that housed UN offices in Algiers.

"We are arranging for repatriation after her siblings arrived [in Manila] from East Timor and Dubai. They are coordinating with the DFA on preparations for the repatriation," Conejos told De Castro.

Ambassador Hilario Davide Jr., Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, said UN deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq notified the Philippine Mission of Luna's death shortly after the UN Secretariat received the information from the Algeria office.

In his report to the DFA, Davide said Luna was the second Filipino international civil servant to die in a terrorist attack against the UN.

Luna joined the WFP, the UN's lead agency in the fight against hunger, in Afghanistan in 2002. She became its finance officer based in Algiers.

On Aug. 19, 2003, Ranilo Buenaventura, of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, was killed along with 21 others when a car bomb leveled the UN office in Baghdad.

The attack, which was claimed by al-Qaida, killed top UN official Sergio Vieira de Mello and seriously wounded his Filipino assistant, Marilyn Manuel.

Davide said the Algiers attack was claimed by an al-Qaida-linked group.

In Rome, WFP Executive Director Josette Sheeran joined UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and others in condemning the attack and conveyed her condolences to the Luna family.

Cynthia D. Balana

Return fees overcharged OFWs—solon

By Norman Bordadora

THE OVERSEAS WELFARE WORKERS Administration (OWWA) should return the excess in membership fees it collected from departing Filipino workers after it allegedly wrongfully used "an artificial exchange rate of P51 to the US dollar," a member of the House of Representatives said yesterday.

Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago said the OWWA should determine who were wrongfully charged after the agency pegged its $25 membership fee at P51 to the dollar, resulting in a P1,275 fee for departing migrant workers.

"This is the right thing to do—for the OWWA to determine who were overcharged, and then give back to the workers the portion of the fees that they, in effect, overpaid for their membership fees," Santiago said.

Santiago pointed out that the peso closed Friday at 41.21 to a dollar. At this rate, he said, the peso equivalent of $25 should only be around P1,030.

Currency arbitrage

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. earlier filed a resolution urging the appropriate Senate committees to look into the use of a fixed rate of P51 to the dollar which pegged at P1,275 the peso equivalent of the $25 membership fee that the OWWA charges departing Filipino workers.

On Dec. 13, OWWA's board of trustees decided to peg the $25 membership fee at an exchange rate of P42 to a dollar, or P1,050. But the lower rate will take effect on Jan. 1.

At the adjusted exchange rate, the membership fee will be reduced by P225 or almost 18 percent less.

Santiago said the reduced rate should be used immediately.

"Where is the spirit of burden-sharing here? Why should OWWA or other agencies get to charge fees based on a preferential exchange rate? Are they now also engaged in the business of currency arbitrage?" Santiago said.

Currency arbitrage means taking advantage of divergences in exchange rates in different money markets by buying a currency in one market and selling it in another. In the process, extraordinary profits are realized from the spread.

Prevailing exchange rates

"The OWWA should be computing the $25-fee based on prevailing exchange rates, in the same manner that migrant workers and their families here have to cope with market rates when they have to convert their dollars into pesos," Santiago said.

Santiago said that based on the estimated one million Filipino workers departing for overseas employment every year, the OWWA collects a total of $25 million, or P1.05 billion, in membership fees every year.

The fees go to a welfare fund that provides benefits, including low-cost loans, to migrant workers and their families here.

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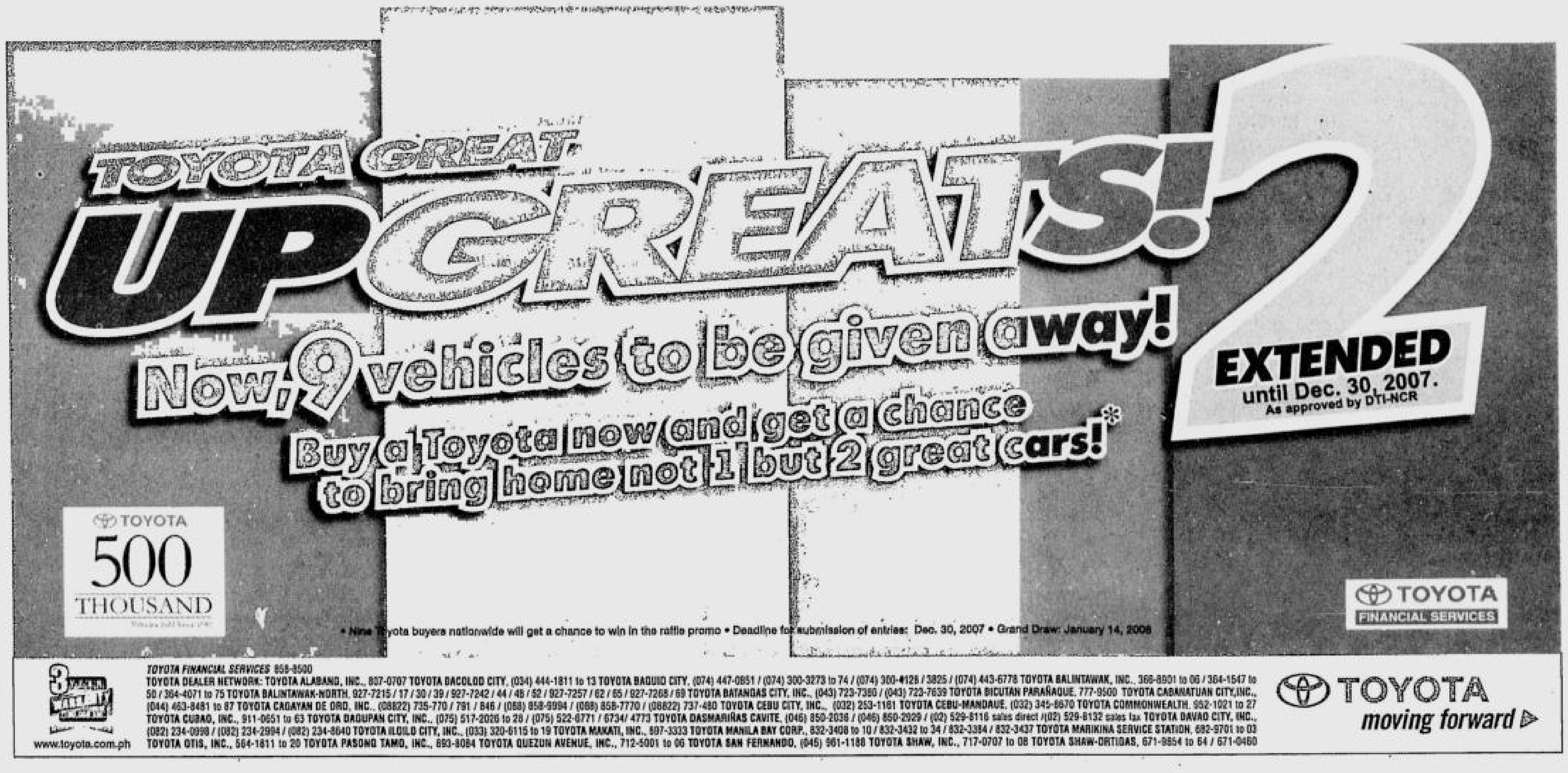
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Jobs on line as revenues fall

By Michelle V. Remo

HEADS WILL ROLL AT THE BUreau of Internal Revenue and other finance agencies should they fail to overturn their tax collection shortfalls.

This is in line with the Lateral Attrition Law, which President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered strictly implemented.

Under the law, which took effect last year, employees of the BIR and the Bureau of Customs may be dismissed if their revenue collection shortfall is at least 7.5 percent of the target of each revenue district office (RDO), and of the BIR's total goal for the year.

Latest DOF data showed the BIR collected P575.4 billion from January to October, well below its target of P629.5 billion for the 10-month period. This translates to a shortfall of P54.1 billion, or 9.4 percent.

Finance Undersecretary Gaudencio Mendoza Jr. said the Department of Finance, mother agency of the BIR, was instructed by President Arroyo to fully enforce the Lateral Attrition Law, one of the fiscal reform measures adopted by the administration to shore up revenues.

On the other hand, the law grants incentives to overperforming BIR and BOC employees.

The government is set to release on Tuesday the fiscal report for November that includes tax collections by the BIR.

For the entire year, the BIR target is P765 billion.

"There will be attrition in the BIR if there is no improvement in their collection," Mendoza told reporters. The law is lenient only if there are valid reasons for the shortfall, such as unmet macroeconomic assumptions which are beyond the control of collecting agencies.

The BIR had said macroeconomic factors such as a slower-than-expected inflation and the drop in interest rates led to lower-than-target collections of the value-added tax and tax on income from bank deposits.

The DOF, however, said the pull-down effects of low inflation and interest rates on the BIR's tax collection should have been more than offset by the robust performance of the economy.

The DOF will analyze the net effect of worse- or better-than-expected macroeconomic assumptions on tax collection to determine whether there should be attrition in the BIR.

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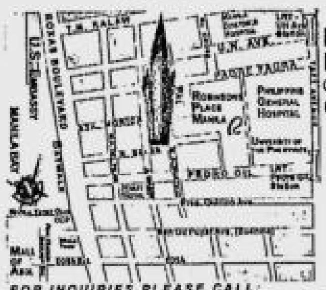

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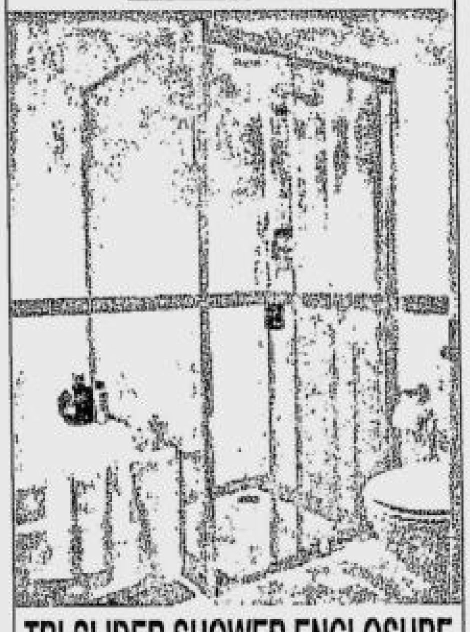

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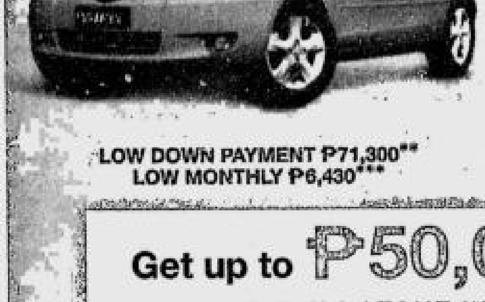

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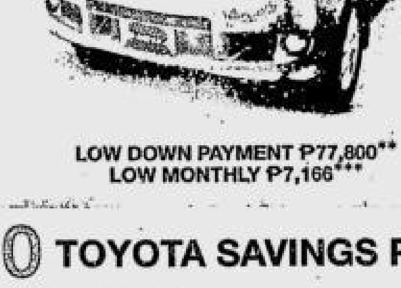

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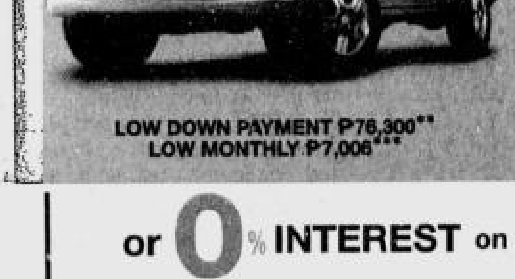

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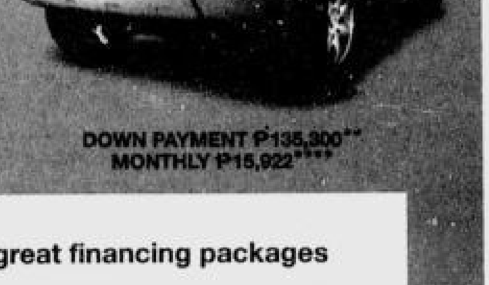

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Guilt by association

EDITORIAL

LEST WE—MOST IMPORTANTLY, PRESIDENT MAcapagal-Arroyo and AFP chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon—forget, the Anti-Subversion Act was passed when the Hukbalahap had been crushed, not to make possible its defeat. The law was proposed by the Magsaysay administration but it was passed only in 1957, early during the Garcia administration (it thus predates Malaysia's Internal Security Act by three years)—at a time when the government no longer considered the Huks a serious threat. The law was meant as a preventive measure—to preclude the resurgence of rebellion.

Therefore, when the President and her open-to-extension AFP chief of staff proposed the revival of the Anti-Subversion Law, on the grounds it would be a vital tool for defeating the New People's Army, they did so from ignorance. We can't help but be concerned over a government that intends to crush an insurgency, and yet remains woefully ignorant about the lessons that must be learned from successful counterinsurgency efforts here and in neighboring nations.

In modern history, two of the most successful counterinsurgency efforts took place in Malaya (today's Malaysia) and the Philippines. And these were directed against home-grown communist rebellions. They both began in the same year, 1946, went through a similar period of lack of success in the first three years, and basically ended a year apart from each other—1957 in the Philippines and 1958 in Malaya.

In both efforts, success was made possible by shifting to the use of small anti-guerrilla units which, skilled in tracking, camouflage and close-hand fighting, aggressively pursued the enemy. This approach was accompanied by shrewd parallel efforts of the governments of both countries to reclaim the moral high ground—the Philippines, through clean elections in 1953 and President Ramon Magsaysay's charismatic and reform-oriented leadership; and Britain, by convincing the Malayans that independence would be granted after communism shall have been crushed. Media in both countries, too, proved generally supportive of the government troops.

Yet both nations crowned their successes with laws meant to ensure no communist movement could ever rise again. The Philippines did so by means of the Anti-Subversion Act; Malaysia did so, by reenacting, after independence, its own Internal Security Act (ISA). The path pursued by both nations, with regard to these laws, is instructive.

The Anti-Subversion Law, in the hands of a Republic grown enfeebled and corrupt, became a favorite tool of a dictatorship incapable of defeating a new Communist Party. Malaysian governments enacted periodic amendments such that Reginald Hugh Hickling, the British lawyer who drafted the colonial-era Internal Security Act (and who helped draft the Malaysian Constitution) would later say, "I could not imagine then that the time would come when the power of detention, carefully and deliberately interlocked with Article 149 of the Constitution, would be used against political opponents, welfare workers and others dedicated to nonviolent, peaceful activities."

The recent round of anti-government demonstrations in Malaysia has led Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, formerly ambivalent about, if not critical of, the ISA, to announce he will implement it without remorse. Here at home, of course, after the Ramos administration's peace initiatives, which included repealing the Anti-Subversion Act, the present administration has never quite abandoned the hope that the law can be revived. In fact, it has begun to actively lobby for its reenactment—using Malaysia's and Singapore's ISA as a model.

We doubt that the dream of a revived Anti-Subversion Law includes retaining the safeguards the statute had against possible abuse of power—e.g., requiring fiscals to build a prima facie case, which could be contested in court by the accused, "who shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to testify, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to cross-examine witnesses against him." And which penalized providing false testimony.

Why do we express this doubt? Because in their recent statements, Esperon and those lobbying for the law's resurrection indicate that they are more intent in a law that establishes guilt by association than in the safeguards such a law should contain. The proposal to revive the law discloses a frustration with democracy; it does not reflect a shrewd audit of the necessary tools for defending the Republic.

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readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342

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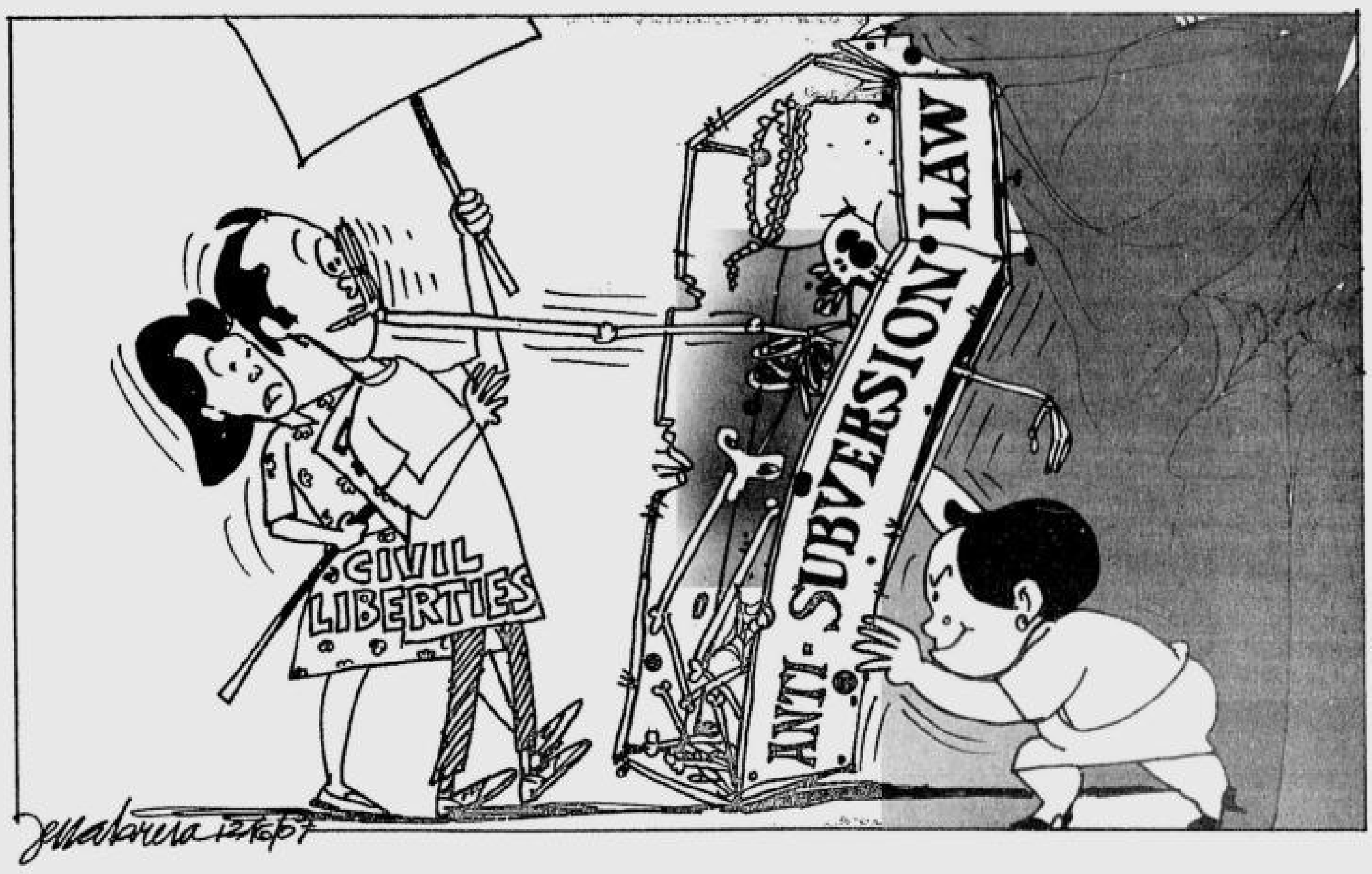

My remembered old Manila

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

"THE GLORY THAT WAS GREECE AND THE grandeur that was Rome" reminds me of the beauty that was Manila many decades ago dating back to the Spanish era when the Philippines was celebrated as "The Pearl of the Orient Seas." That deserved title described the whole exotic archipelago, but it more appropriately applied to its storied capital city facing the vast Pacific Ocean as its link to the still mysterious Asia and the distant lands beyond.

Manila, admired best by its proud residents for the colorful artistry that limns the skies above the bay at sunset, was to play an important part, indeed a crucial one, in the history and making of our country. As Nick Joaquin said in his labor of love, the delightful "Manila, My Manila," "Its happenings have a national effect. When Manila sneezes, the Philippines catches cold."

It was in Manila that Miguel Lopez de Legaspi centralized in 1871 the Spanish government that enslaved our people for more than three centuries. American imperialism took over with the mock battle in Manila Bay that Dewey reputedly won in 1898 while Aguinaldo and his forces waited in the suburbs to capture the city from the Spaniards. It was also in Manila that we became an independent republic in 1946 that made our destiny as a free people no better (and definitely worse now) than before.

Rizal as a young man studied in the University of Santo Tomas, where he would relate a class in physics in the Fili and later wrote prize-winning poems of liberty in the Ateneo de Manila. The three Filipino priests—reverently remembered as the martyred Gomburza—were garroted publicly in Bagumbayan. It was also from this city that Marcelo del Pilar sailed to Madrid to edit La Solidaridad while Andres Bonifacio stayed home in Tondo to organize the Katipunan and plot the Revolution.

As the seat of government, Manila preserved Malacañang for the chief executives from Spain and America and up to now, from Pampanga. The solons met in the Legislative Building near the Manila City Hall until Marcos abolished Congress in 1972. The Supreme Court originally sat at the Ayuntamiento in Intramuros before it moved to its present location in Ermita after the Japanese Occupation.

The most important political forum in the whole Philippines was Plaza Miranda in front of the Quiapo Church. Manila was also the center of commercial, social and artistic activities. Escolta was the most prestigious street in the country with its luxurious shops like La Estrella del Norte and impressive buildings like Heacock's, where the politicians met for coffee and cigars at the Botica Boie. Berg's was the top emporium for everything from guns to *hula* hoops, and the PNB was there too with all that money.

The first class theaters were all in Manila, together with the popular *cines* showing double programs plus the "vod-a-vil." The practical restaurant for limited allowances was the Aristocrat, and those with cash to splurge could go to dinner at the new Selecta. Only the affluent enjoyed the Manila Hotel but the Manila Cathedral welcomed rich and poor alike.

It was because of its prestige and prosperity that people from the provinces flocked to Manila until it became overcrowded. The old Manila is gone now with its genteel charm and class. Escolta is a decayed street and no longer the modern and stylish "downtown" of old. The once impressive buildings have become squalid and small compared to the high-rise edifices in the more progressive suburbs. Even the Luneta, where people relaxed during weekends to enjoy its wide open greenery and the breezes from the sea, has lost its appeal to the commercial conveniences of the air-conditioned malls around the city. Plaza Miranda no longer rings with angry speeches and is now the cheap selling place of love potions and fake watches.

"Where are the snows of yesteryears?" muses the lonely dreamer as memories tug at his heart of lovely maidens and dead romances magically reborn in his mind's eye to make him young again. The inhabitants of Manila in its prime before arthritis gripped it, and them too, savor the thrill and regret of remembering their beloved city by the bay.

The orange Meralco streetcars, the Mehan Garden, UP on Padre Faura, the Kahirup Club" couples dancing the rigodon, the races at the Manila Jockey Club, the smooching at the "biggest in the world" Sta. Ana Cabaret, the shouts of the vendors selling "*puto, kutsinta!*" in the early morning and "*balot, penoy!*" late into the night, and *lumpiang* Shanghai in the Chinese panciterias on T. Pinpin in Sta. Cruz—this was the old Manila during the vanished years.

I am a devoted son of Manila, which is why I am saddened by its decline from the proud and premier city it used to be to its present derelict condition. After so many years away from it, I visited my native Sampaloc and missed the *nipa* houses, the graveled streets, the beautiful acacia trees and, most of all, the friendly neighbors of my youth. It was heartbreaking.

Still, I am hopeful that Manila will rise again like a phoenix from the past, to be again the real capital city of the Philippines. I can hardly wait for its rejuvenation under the visionary and energetic leadership of Mayor Alfredo S. Lim, another nostalgic Manileño.

Ignorance and indifference

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A PRIEST WHO started his homily by saying: "Today, I'm going to talk about ignorance and indifference. Anybody has an idea what these are all about?"

A grumpy parishioner blurted out: "I don't know, and I don't care."

And the priest said: "That is precisely what I want to talk about today!"

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mt. 11, 2-11), we hear of John and his disciples who wanted to know, and who cared enough to want to know, whether Jesus was the one "who is to come," or whether they should look for another. They were earnest in their search for the truth and zealous in their search for the good and for God. Is truth a value to you? Is goodness of importance in your life? Does God really matter in your life at all?

* * *

"I don't know and I don't care." The meaning of ignorance and indifference comes out more clearly in Tagalog: *Hindi ko alam, at wala akong pakialam!* This seems to be the attitude that is fast spreading in our present-day society and culture, especially toward values, religion and God.

* * *

It all boils down to values. For some whose value in life is money, truth is just a mere commodity that can be trampled on and manipulated. For some whose primary concern (and value) is money, goodness and godliness are foolishness and plain stupidity. When truth, goodness and God are thrown out, expect morality also to be minimal, if not, zero in a person's life. Then we have moral bankruptcy. The problem is worse when a morally bankrupt person becomes a leader, surrounded, supported, protected and perpetuated by people made of the same stuff.

* * *

"Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" This question underlines the basic right of people to know the truth, and their basic right to choose. Let us exercise these rights. Let us protest when these rights are trampled upon. Let us make sure that we are not fooled, manipulated, used and abused by a few powerful, influential, rich and greedy men and women whose basic value and concern are to make more money, lots and lots of money.

* * *

Excuse my naiveté for asking again: How much money does one need to have in this life? How much money does one must have before one says "Enough"? What are the parameters in one's acquisition for riches and wealth? And the bottom-line question is: For whom, for what?

* * *

Last Dec. 12 which was the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, I had a "captive" audience in a Mass I celebrated at the maximum security compound of the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa. The occasion was organized by the chaplain, Msgr. Robert Olaguer, who has been assigned there for the past 17 years, one week, and seven days already. We were escorted by Monsignor Olaguer's PSG (Pastoral Security Group). Fatima Soriano touched the hearts of the inmates with her message and songs of hope. Happy to have met a good and dedicated pastor of 19,000 inmates, and happy for the realization that prison is not so much in what is outside us, but in what is inside us.

* * *

I would like to acknowledge the likes of Mayor Joel Payumo who show appreciation for our hardworking teachers. The mayor organized an annual Teacher's Day and recollection in Dinalupihan, Bataan. Yes, there are a lot of simple, dedicated public servants who continue to serve our people in very hidden ways. Another such public servant is Mayor Marcelo Navarro Jr. of Bani, Pangasinan, who cares for the environment, and who is bringing quality education to the grass roots. May we have more public servants like them, and less of public servants like you-know-who.

* * *

Think about it: A trash can is just an unnoticed and insignificant item for most of us, but for the street children, it is itself a source of life from where one can find the next meal. This Christmas, please be very responsive to the many poor and hungry people around us.

* * *

By the way, many of us have our Christmas wishes. Fine. But please don't forget to ask also the Birthday Celebrator His birthday wish. Is there anything He is asking from you and me? A bad habit that needs to be given up? A relationship that needs to be healed? A person to love more? Someone to forgive? A blessing to be shared, perhaps? Yes, let's ask Him, after all, it's His birthday, remember?

* * *

It's nine days before Christmas. Think about it: It's Christmas once again, and we are still alive. It means you and I still have a mission in life. Let us not waste our lives pursuing worldly riches and comforts. Let no one be hurt as we pass by this earth.

* * *

Think about this too: There were people who were with us last Christmas, and are no longer with us this Christmas. And, there are people who are with us this Christmas who may not be with us anymore next Christmas.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:
Lord, help me not to be ignorant and indifferent especially when it comes to love. Amen.

National Union of Students of the Philippines

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

THE NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS OF THE Philippines (NUSP) is celebrating its 50th anniversary by holding its 36th National Student Congress in Cebu City on Dec. 14-18. As a founder and past president of NUSP, I keynoted the conference by recalling the vision and values that guided the union's founding.

The cold war. In the 1950s, the world was divided into two great camps: the liberal democracies led by the United States; and the totalitarian-communist states headed by the erstwhile Soviet Union. The great powers battled the "cold war," the insidious struggle for the minds and loyalties of the peoples of the world.

The cold war's long international tentacles crept into the student movements in the Philippines and elsewhere. A congressional investigation in 1957 showed that the communists infiltrated the then leading student organizations, especially the Student Councils Association of the Philippines (SCAP) and the Conference Delegates Association (CONDA). Their leaders were allegedly wined, dined and indoctrinated during meetings held in communist countries.

Apart from that, the government muzzled student leaders by enlisting them in the President's "Little Cabinet." They were pampered with free travel, doles and other perks, in exchange for partisan political favors. During the elections of the SCAP in September 1957, I questioned—as the then new president of the FEU Central Student Organization—these communist and partisan political activities that shackled SCAP and CONDA.

Birth of NUSP. I received no satisfactory answer. Instead, SCAP leaders tried to placate me by electing me vice president for international affairs of SCAP, a much-coveted position that would have entitled me to travel free of charge to many countries, with pocket money from Malacañang. These were tempting propositions to the very poor student that I was. However, I chose the more difficult path. I walked out from the meeting, seceded from SCAP and CONDA, rejected my vice-presidential election, and refused membership in the "Little Cabinet."

Luckily, I was not alone in my idealism. Student leaders from the University of the Philippines (led by Fernando Lagua), University of Santo Tomas (Julio Macaranas), San Beda College (Alfonso Aguirre), St. Theresa's (Ma. Theresa Endencia), National University (Miguel Sanidad) and Sta. Isabel (Hermila Milaflor) also walked out. Yes, FEU and these six schools formed the nucleus of the NUSP. Subsequently, several others—including many "cloistered" Catholic colleges—joined.

NUSP's ideals. Our vision-mission was stressed in a speech I delivered as president: "The NUSP was founded as the answer to the decadent state of student leadership in the country. The Union is pledged to unite and reflect faithfully student opinion on current national issues, to free the youth from undue political interferences, to fight communist infiltration in the campuses, and to redirect the youth's thinking and energy to constructive idealism."

Its core values were "dignity, integrity, independence, liberty, responsibility and democracy." Let me say with pardonable pride that these ideals were achieved, because the communist effort to infiltrate student movements failed and the "Little Cabinet" was dissolved.

I was only a second-year law student when NUSP was born. So, I had two more years to help nurse it during its infancy. Thereafter, I formed and administered, for three years, the Institute of Student Affairs to secure financial aid, "without strings," for the union while I was an assistant in the law firm of Dr. Jovito R. Salonga.

Over the years, many young leaders became involved in NUSP, to name a few, John Osmeña, Raul Roco, Rene Saguisag, Sonia Malasarte, Ricardo Puno Jr., Ronaldo Puno, Salvador Britanico, Violy Calvo, Loida and Mely Nicolas, Macapanton Abbas, Carlos Padilla, Miriam Defensor, Tina Monzon, Jose Lina, Francis Pangilinan, Lean Alejandro, Chito Gascon, Lorenzo Tañada III, Hernani Braganza, and Mike Defensor.

Some of them led the "First Quarter Storm." They protested and rallied incessantly against the abuses of martial law. 1972 NUSP President Edgar Jopson laid down his life fighting for the union's ideals. Ferdinand Marcos was so displeased by the NUSP's crusade for freedom that he banned the union. But after he was toppled in 1986, NUSP resurrected and became once more the dominant student movement. Now, it boasts of over 450 member-schools.

Present problems. The twin problems of my youth, communist infiltration and government intervention, pale in comparison with the difficulties facing the nation today: wrenching poverty, declining educational standards, corruption, electoral cheating, human right violations, extralegal disappearances, lack of accountability, weakened democratic institutions, recurring insurgencies and military mutinies.

Our country belongs to the young; the seniors merely administer it for them in the meantime. When the old falter in their duty, the youth must remonstrate in the hallowed tradition of NUSP. Thus, during the Cebu confab, I urged the delegates to raise their voices, tackle these plagues, denounce their perpetrators, and offer some perspectives and solutions. I shall eagerly await their response.

* * *

NUSP reunion. The Alumni of the NUSP are gearing for a grand reunion on Aug. 8, 2008; that's 8-8-8. Contact the secretariat for details: Mely Nicolas (imn103@aol.com) or Me Ann Gonzales (g.meann@gmail.com).

* * *

Comments welcome at chiefjusticepanganiban@hotmail.com

Why our 'nanays' die

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE CHRISTMAS STORY REALLY REVOLVES around a maternity story, and a high-risk maternity at that. To begin with, Mary was young (scholars estimate her age at 14 when she became "with child") and thus was already at high risk. (On the other hand, her aunt Ann, whose first pregnancy occurred when she was already "old," likewise was at high risk.)

Having joined her husband in a long, arduous journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Mary was further put at risk when she was forced to deliver her baby in unsanitary conditions (you can't get any dirtier than in a manger) and without skilled assistance. After all, even if he had thought of getting a birth attendant, Joseph would have been hard put finding one in a place where he was a stranger. Young, fatigued, with only her husband (and a few angels and shepherds) by her side, Mary's survival and that of her baby, was in itself a miracle, even if only in medical terms.

But while the miracle of Jesus' birth is celebrated yearly, and according to tradition heralded by angels and attended by shepherds and wise men, the birth of "ordinary" babies in this country—by many estimates 2 million a year—is taken for granted. Sadly, so are the deaths of many of these babies' mothers. Maternal mortality, the deaths of our *nanays* due to causes related to pregnancy and child birth, is a continuing scandal that most of us seem to be unaware of, or choose to ignore.

* * *

WHILE our maternal mortality rates have been falling, they have been falling too slowly, so much so that our neighboring countries, which have taken more decisive action to bring down maternal mortality, have left us behind.

Health Undersecretary Dr. Mario Villaverde, who was part of the Philippine delegation to the "RHCS Advocacy" workshop in Bangkok, says the health department takes the problem of maternal mortality so seriously that "we now consider every pregnancy and delivery as high-risk."

Still, the risks for *nanays* remain high. Seven out of 10 births here take place at home, with 45 percent of the mothers attended to by "traditional birth attendants" or TBAs, more commonly known as "hilots." Women die during delivery, says Dr. Villaverde, because even women who don't exhibit any problems during their pre-natal checkups can suddenly develop complications. It takes a trained health professional, or a highly compassionate *hilot*, to recognize signs of these complications and rush the women in time to a health facility where they can get help.

The trouble is that many *hilots* may persist in caring for the mothers under their care even in the face of problems, because turning them over to a hospital will mean a loss of income for them. "That is why any solution to maternal mortality must involve compensating the *hilot* so she may more willingly rush women with problems to a health facility," says Dr. Villaverde.

* * *

IN SOME cases, the *hilot* may want to rush a woman to a hospital, but they live in a remote village without roads, or no form of transportation is available.

Why do women continue to give birth at home? The answer, surprisingly, is not just cost or convenience, but also "quality of care." "Many mothers feel they are not treated well in a hospital," admits Dr. Villaverde, "they prefer giving birth at home where they can find comfort from the *hilot* they have known all their lives, and from their mothers and other female relatives."

Our *nanays* die, then, because of the same reasons poor "Mrs. X" in my previous column died. They die because they don't have the capacity or ability to decide for themselves—whether they should get pregnant and whether they can space their pregnancies. They die because they are in poor health, and with anemia and poor nutrition affecting almost half of all pregnant women. And our *nanays* die because the system fails them many times along the way to delivery: in providing pre-natal care, in providing enough hospital beds or trained attendants during delivery, and in providing quality emergency obstetric care when a crisis occurs.

Where are the angels attending to our *nanays* and singing of the miracle of their survival?

* * *

"BUILDING Partnerships for Effective Local Governance" is the theme of Panibagong Paraan 2008, the annual search for innovative ideas to address development challenges.

Deadline for the submission of entries, in the form of concept papers, is next Saturday, Dec. 22.

Winners of "Panibagong Paraan," sponsored by the local World Bank office in cooperation with other international agencies, embassies and development offices, will win up to P1 million to be used to turn their innovative ideas into action within a year.

Civil society organizations, educational and research institutions, local government units—or any of them working in partnership—are invited to send proposals under any of the following categories: governance and administration, delivery of basic social services, economic development, environmental management, disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation, and population and development.

From the submitted project proposals, semi-finalists will be selected and asked to submit full-blown proposals. After a screening process, the field will be further narrowed down to finalists who will be asked to take part in a two-day exhibit during which a panel of jurors will evaluate their entries and select the winners.

Entries should be submitted via e-mail or courier/mail/hand delivery to dimp@worldbank.org, cc: dimp2008_wb@yahoo.com or to the Panibagong Paraan 2008 Secretariat, 23rd floor, Taipan Place, F. Ortigas Jr. Road (formerly Emerald Ave.), Ortigas, Pasig (Please indicate Subject as: Project Grant Competition Entry).

Europe's 'Russia Question'

WORLD VIEW

Giles Merritt

BRUSSELS—FRIEND OR FOE, OR SOMETHING uneasily in-between? That's the question Europe is asking about Russia, and Russia about a newly aggressive Europe. President Vladimir Putin's choice of Dmitri Medvedev, chair of Gazprom, the gas company with an emerging stranglehold on European energy supplies, only throws this question into an even starker light.

Relations between Europe and Russia have been deteriorating for several years. Once manageable economic issues, including energy, are now being aggravated by much more volatile political differences. The risk is a climate of undisguised hostility, with potentially greater costs than during the nadir of the Cold War.

The most obvious and imminent flash point is Kosovo. The likelihood is that early next year most of the European Union's member-nations will recognize the Albanian-majority enclave in Serbia's southern edge as an independent state. This is certain to enflame not just Serbia, but also the Kremlin.

Then there are rising tensions over plans by the United States to base a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, as well as the growing likelihood that further Nato enlargement will include Georgia, the increasingly prosperous neighbor with which Russia has fractious relations. Russia continues to fan secessionist flames there by encouraging the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Tempers are rising in both Russia and Europe, yet, paradoxically, when it comes to the major challenges they face, their interests are largely identical. Both are threatened by Islamic extremism and growing unrest. Both have much to lose if the Middle East erupts into fresh violence. And both face serious demographic problems, given shrinking and aging populations, as well as the challenge of Asia's rising superpowers.

The breakdown in relations has been gradual and undramatic—more of a morose and resentful refusal to see each other's point of view than a succession of rows. This owes much to the humiliations that Russia suffered when the end of communism forced its economy to its knees, and to Western shortsightedness about Russia's fundamental strengths and resilience.

The European Union is as much to blame as the Kremlin. In the years since the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union/USSR), neither the European Union nor European national policymakers have devised a coherent strategy setting out the relationship that Europe wants with the Russian Federation.

Today, it is more important than ever that the European Union, which now includes not only former Soviet satellites but also countries that were part of the USSR, should create a strategic policy framework. This reflects not only worries about energy and shared security concerns, but also the need to head off any looming crisis in the Middle East that could plunge large parts of the world into turmoil, if not armed conflict.

There, and in the volatile Caucasus, a significant improvement in Europe's relations with Russia is crucial to defusing tensions. For its part, Europe needs to mount a charm offensive to persuade Putin and Medvedev that Russia's real interest is in improving bilateral relations. Russia needs to collaborate on energy in ways that bring genuine security. In the Middle East, it needs to persuade Iran to hold in check the military elements of the nuclear program that Russia has made possible.

None of this will be easy, not only because Europe's relationship with Russia has grown so chilly, but also because Putin is understood to despise the European Union as politically impotent. Russian leaders may have misinterpreted as a sign of weakness Europe's representation at last month's EU-Russia summit by two Portuguese politicians—European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso and Prime Minister Jose Socrates, whose government currently holds the revolving EU presidency.

Most telling in Russian eyes has been the EU countries' competition for oil and gas contracts, which has done much to convince the Kremlin that Europe is not a political force to be reckoned with.

On the European side, engineering a new spirit of détente will be tough. There is widespread disapproval of Putin's autocratic style and of his government's human rights record. Extending an olive branch to Russia will have little or no voter appeal in most EU countries, and Putin's efforts to retain power de facto, if not de jure, after Medvedev clinches his likely victory next March are certain to make matters worse.

The question, therefore, is whether Europe and Russia can establish a new framework for talking to one another. There are plenty of well-worn diplomatic paths, so it's not structures that are lacking. What's needed is a more positive frame of mind, and specific ideas about what to do. *Project Syndicate/Europe's World*

Giles Merritt is secretary general of Friends of Europe and editor of the policy journal Europe's World.

Good news from Davao

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot

John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues

THE PAST MONTHS HAVE SEEN NOTHING BUT HORRIBLE news for the country—most of which can be traced back to the Palace by the Pasig River. Indeed, the stink of the latter is matched only by the stink of corruption and human rights violations wafting from the former.

But while people are still hoping to revive the river, they see Malacañang, with its present occupant, as a place beyond redemption. So much so that many of them waited in "hopeful" anticipation of the outcome of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV's latest caper. (I was in class when it happened and so I conducted an instant poll among my students. Only two were against what Trillanes was doing.)

Somehow, this made me think that if one is looking for good news—or for even the faintest sign that this country is not entirely hopeless—he or she should look outside Metro Manila. For many of us, this means checking out the Across the Nation section of the INQUIRER.

Last Dec. 4, the section carried a report about what seems to be a first-ever-in-the-Philippines which, to me, was one of the best news events to recently happen in the country: the approval of the Comprehensive Urban Shelter and Services Development Code of Davao City.

Although many civil society groups in the city are ambivalent about Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's unorthodox style, they are one in praising his signing of this new shelter code for the city. I think he will be remembered positively for this very progressive piece of legislation.

One of the most significant provisions in the new code is the requirement that housing developers in the city set aside for the urban poor 20 percent of their project costs which may be in the form of land. Already, several housing developers have complied with this requirement. Alsons Development and Investment Corp. has set aside 20 hectares while Robinsons Development Corp., which is developing a high-end subdivision has also donated 15 hectares.

Dam Vertido, one of the long-time social development practitioners in the city, was quoted in the INQUIRER article as saying that the new housing policy would help address the growing problem of urban poor housing in the city. One of the people's organizations (PO) leaders in the city was also quoted in Sun Star Davao as saying, "*Lipay kaayo mi nga wala na siya na*-veto. *Gi*-review *gyud sa mga konsehal. Sa* nine months *nga among hulat-hulat, na*-approve *ra gyud* (We are very happy it was not vetoed again. The councilors reviewed it carefully. After nine months of waiting, it was finally approved)."

I was also very happy to hear this piece of good news because I have done two housing and urban development-related researches in the city and I have become friends not only with the NGO and PO leaders who have been pushing for such a progressive shelter code, but also with mothers whose families stand to benefit tremendously from it.

The first research was on the successful initiatives of POs and NGOs in providing shelter for the city's urban poor. One of the successful projects I documented is in Barangay Ma-a where informal settlers live in the shadow of posh villages. It became famous recently as the *barangay* where a 12-year-old girl named Mariannet Amper committed suicide because of her family's extreme poverty.

(The city authorities are now investigating if foul play attended her death. But whatever the cause of her death, let it be said that I have seen with my own eyes the poverty in Ma-a. It is no exaggeration to say that people there are dying, maybe not as dramatically as Mariannet died but just as tragically. And this tragedy is being played out daily in many slum areas throughout the country.)

The first research also showed that if given financial, technical and moral support, the poor would be willing and able to work hard toward providing themselves with shelter. Mind you, they do not want doles. In fact, the research showed that the repayment rates for land acquisition loans were quite high. Still, such successful housing projects need to be scaled up to make a significant dent on the growing housing problem in the city. I believe that the new shelter code will help achieve this, especially now that land is being set aside for the urban poor as a matter of course.

The second study was a city process-mapping research which I did with my mentor at the Institute of Housing and Development Studies or IHS in the Netherlands. (The research is part of a book which was launched at the World Urban Forum in Vancouver. You may check it online through the IHS website: www.ihs.nl.) The study showed that there was little collaboration between civil society groups in Davao City and the city government. It therefore recommended that they work more closely together.

Claudio Acioly, my research partner-mentor, personally encouraged urban development practitioners in the city to work together and engage the city government productively, instead of working in isolation on their individual projects. I would like to think that the new shelter code is one of the fruits of such a productive engagement and I hope that it will lead to more collaboration among the various stakeholders in the city, especially because one of the provisions in the code is the creation of a Local Housing Board, a "multi-stakeholder" body that will formulate urban development and housing policies for the city.

As I have said, this is good news not only for Davao City but also for the whole country. The latest count shows that there are 136 cities in the country which are also struggling with housing shortage and other problems that come with urban development. As one of the biggest cities in the country, Davao City is looked up to by other cities as a model of development. Thus, it is hoped that other cities will follow Davao City's example.

Malacañang may be hopeless, but the country is not. Davao City has given us reason to somehow feel that this is truly a season of hope.

THEY SAID

Wrong shoes

"If I knew what was going to happen, I wouldn't have worn heels."

—News anchor Ces Drilon's answer to police insinuations that ABS-CBN had advance knowledge of the Peninsula Manila mutiny

Shabby treatment

"I said, 'B—t, Mr. Trillanes! Do you think you have the monopoly of patriotism and love of country?' I guess that was out of frustration—going there and staying there the whole day, trying to peacefully settle the matter, trying to stay cool and being treated shabbily."

—National Capital Region Police Office head Director Geary Barias, admitting that he lost his cool with Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV

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TALK of the TOWN

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

'Collapsing' Filipino middle class

DESPITE ECONOMIC GROWTH, THE NUMBER OF MIDdle class Filipinos and their share of the national income pie have shrunk.

The signs of a shrinking middle class are plain to see. Many professionals, from medical practitioners to executives, continue to migrate to developed countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia in search of greener pastures.

They are joined by a record number of Filipinos working abroad because of the poor pay and bleak employment picture in the country.

Another sign is the growing number of students transferring from private schools to public schools because of spiraling tuition.

The rising cost of goods and services, partly as a result of high fuel prices, is further eroding the living standards of middle-class families.

A study by Romulo Virola, Mildred Addawe and Ma. Ivy Querubin of the National Statistical Coordination Board found that there was at least a 2-percentage-point decline in the population share of the middle class between 2000 and 2003.

They also found a 4.6-percentage-point drop in the number of middle-class families with overseas-Filipino-worker members.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ/PAGE DESIGN BY ERNIE SAMBO

Antipoverty? How about pro-middle class?

By Dr. Romulo A. Virola

WE ALL KNOW THAT the overarching goal of our development efforts is to reduce poverty. Toward this end, many programs and policies have been formulated, implemented and monitored over the years. Surely, there are improvements here and there, but the pace of progress just does not seem fast enough. In fact, per the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) monitoring by the National Statistical Coordination Board, we only have a medium probability of attaining our target to halve poverty by 2015! Why? Is something wrong with the implementation of these programs or are our poverty reduction strategies simply ill-conceived?

Generally, it is believed that, for a country to be truly and sustainably prosperous, there must be a broad-based middle class that serves as a stabilizing influence on society.

Knowledge

A middle class that has the knowledge, the skills and the resources to foster economic growth and help generate employment for the poor. But so far, the poverty reduction programs we have crafted have focused mainly on being "pro-poor," "antipoverty," helping the "poorest provinces," etc.

We seem to have completely ignored the needs of and the strategic importance of building and expanding the middle class of Philippine society. Thus, while we all agree to want to help the poorest of the poor, a strategy that pays attention to the middle class may be more effective in achieving our MDG goal to halve poverty by 2015! It is then of interest to find out what is happening to the Pinoy middle class.

Petty bourgeoisie

And just who constitutes this middle class? Does it include those of us who love to be seen spending precious moments at the gym either to make *chismis* or *para makahanap ng* gf or bf, in other words, *para makahanap ng mabibiktima*? Or those of us who go to the golf course and watch our handicap soar to new heights each day?

The noisy minority perhaps, who complain about many things and everything, instead of counting their blessings? Or the intellectuals that many of us think we are, the petit bourgeoisie, the Doña Victorina, Angelika Santibañez, Ariel and Maverick or whoever we and Inday can relate to?

In the United States, ideological and economic theories consider the middle class consisting of all those who are neither "poor" nor "rich," or being a relative elite of professionals and managers, defined by lifestyle and influence.

Debate on definition

Sometimes, the middle class is defined simply as the statistical middle class, meaning those whose income is in the middle of the income distribution, like the middle 50 percent. No matter if the statistical middle class cannot afford the so-called middle-class lifestyle—government statisticians cannot! But surely, the debate will continue as to what constitutes the middle class.

During the 10th National Convention on Statistics held on Oct. 1-2, we wrote and presented a paper titled "Trends and Characteristics of the Middle-Income Class in the Philippines: Is it Expanding or Shrinking?" [Virola's co-writers were Mildred B. Addawe and Ma. Ivy T. Querubin.]

Income

The paper attempted to define the middle class in terms of income and in terms of socioeconomic characteristics. Using cluster analysis and multiple regression on data from the Family Income and Expenditures Survey (FIES) of the National Statistics Office, the paper provided a glimpse of a possibly collapsing middle class of Philippine society.

The following results were obtained:

- The middle-income class may be defined as those families who, in 2007, have total annual income ranging from P251, P283 to P2,045,280. In terms of socioeconomic characteristics, the middle-income families are those who meet all of the following requirements: 1. whose housing unit is made of strong roof materials; 2. who own a house and lot; 3. who own a refrigerator; and 4. who own a radio.

The general population spent the most in the following expenditure items: 1. food, 46.58 percent; 2. housing and repairs, 16.80 percent; 3. transportation and communication, 7.52 percent; 4. fuel, light and water, 6.95 percent; and 5. education, 3.83 percent. The expenditure items with the least shares are 1. recreation; 0.38 percent; 2. other miscellaneous items, 1.04 percent; 3. tobacco, 1.19 percent; 4. household operations, 1.23 percent; and 5. household furnishing and equipment, 1.76 percent.

No conspicuous spending

On the other hand, it is good to note that the middle-income class does not seem to favor a lifestyle of conspicuous consumption. Its top expenditure items are 1. food; 2. house rent; 3. transportation and communication; 4. fuel, light and water; and 5. education. The expenditure items with the least shares are 1. nondurable furnishings; 2. alcoholic beverages; (obviously, the middle class has no passion, despite Iza Calzado); 3. tobacco (which Lucio Tan may not like); 4. recreation; and 5. house maintenance and minor repairs. (*See Table 1.*)

- While the Filipino middle class shrank only a little between 1997 and 2000, there was at least a 2-percentage-point decrease in the population share of the middle class between 2000 and 2003. (*See Table 2.*)
- The number of middle-income families actually increased from 1997 to 2000, but decreased from 2000 to 2003. (*See Table 3.*)

Expanding low-income class

- The percentage share of both the middle- and high-income classes shrank between 1997 and 2000, as well as between 2000 and 2003, resulting in an expanding low-income class in Philippine society.

As of 2003, less than 1 in 100 families belongs to the high income class; about 20 are middle income and 80 are low income. Thus, in a span of six years from 1997 to 2003, for every 100 middle-income families, three families were lost to the low-income category.

Of course, it must be stressed that the low-income class is not necessarily poor, but this trend maybe the basis when people (the middle class?) complain that they do not feel the impact of the economic progress that the country has achieved in recent years. (*See Table 3.*)

Preliminary results of the 2006 FIES seem to indicate a continuation of the pattern. The good news is that the ratio of the income of the richest 30 percent to that of the poorest 30 percent and the ratio of the income of the richest 10 percent to that of the poorest 10 percent has gone down.

In addition, the Gini coefficient has improved from 0.4605 in 2003 to 0.4564 in 2006, indicating an income distribution that is getting slightly more equitable. The bad news is that the income share of the families in the fifth to the seventh deciles has gone down, meaning that the income share of some of the middle-class families has shrunk. (*See Table 4.*)

Challenge

Although the middle-income class has expanded in countries like China and India, this phenomenon of a collapsing middle class is present in other countries. For example, Wikipedia cites statistics about the shrinking American middle class as well: over the past two decades, the number of American households in the middle half of the income distribution decreased from 48.2 percent to 44.3 percent!

Indeed, it is a challenge to our development planners to do something about and for the middle class. We can no longer ignore the seemingly systematic shrinking of the group of professionals and skilled workers who can spell the difference between us being mired in poverty or crossing over to the league of First World countries by 2020.

But then, if the Pinoy middle class is truly shrinking, why are spas burgeoning? Or why does business at Starbucks seem to be sizzling? And our neighbors at Rustan's always a-rushing? Maybe we are spending just much more than we can afford?

Have a Merry Christmas!

(Dr. Romulo A. Virola is the secretary general of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) and chair of the Statistical Research and Training Center. He holds a Ph. D. in Statistics from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA and has taught Mathematics and Statistics at the University of the Philippines. This article first appeared in Virola's column, "Statistically Speaking," on the NSCB website on Dec. 10. He can be contacted at ra.virola@nscb.gov.ph)

Table 1. Top and bottom 5 major expenditure items

Top 5

Rank	General Population 2000 Item	Share	Middle-Income Class 2000 Item	Share	Middle-Income Class 2003 Item	Share
1	Food	46.58	Food	36.22	Food	34.08
2	Housing and repairs	16.80	House rent Rental value	15.24	House rent Rental value	14.80
3	Transportation and communication	7.52	Transportation and communication	8.62	Transportation and communication	9.51
4	Fuel, light and water	6.95	Fuel, light and water	5.90	Fuel, light and water	6.22
5	Educational	3.83	Educational	5.72	Educational	5.76

Bottom 5

Rank	General Population 2000 Item	Share	Middle-Income Class 2000 Item	Share	Middle-Income Class 2003 Item	Share
1	Recreational	0.38	Nondurable furnishings	0.25	Nondurable furnishings	0.22
2	Other miscellaneous Items	1.04	Alcoholic beverages	0.51	Alcoholic beverages	0.48
3	Tobacco	1.19	Tobacco	0.67	Tobacco	0.62
4	Household operations	1.23	Recreation	0.67	Recreation	0.63
5	Household furnishing and equipment	1.76	House maintenance and minor repairs	1.06	House maintenance and minor repairs	0.75

Table 2. Annual family income of the middle-income class: 1997, 2000 and 2003

Year	Family Income Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Percent Families
1997	P278,305	P226,398	P148,307	P1,207,122	23.0
2000	331,646	268,700	178,468	1,449,295	22.7
2003	366,329	298,380	203,109	1,651,632	19.9

Table 3. Distribution of families by income class: 1997, 2000 and 2003

Year	Income Class Low Level	Low Percent	Middle Level	Middle Percent	High Level	High Percent
1997	10,881,914	76.6	3,260,474	23.0	50,074	0.4
2000	11,598,258	77.0	3,422,524	22.7	51,160	0.3
2003	13,172,033	79.9	3,282,511	19.9	25,849	0.2

Table 4. Percentage-point change in income share[a], 2003-2006: Philippines[b]

INCOME DECILE	2006	2003	PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE, 2003-2006
FIRST TO FOURTH	**13.2687**	**13.1309**	**+0.1378**
FIRST	1.8717	1.8055	+0.0662
SECOND	2.9412	2.8724	+0.0688
THIRD	3.7767	3.7751	+0.0016
FOURTH	4.6791	4.6779	+0.0013
FIFTH TO SEVENTH	**22.0588**	**22.1584**	**-0.0996**
FIFTH	5.7821	5.8268	-0.0448
SIXTH	7.1858	7.2220	-0.0362
SEVENTH	9.0909	9.1096	-0.0187
EIGHTH TO TENTH	**64.6767**	**64.7066**	**-0.0299**
EIGHTH	11.8984	11.8588	+0.0396
NINTH	16.8783	16.5778	+0.3006
TENTH	35.9000	36.2700	-0.3700
Ratio of top 30 percent over bottom 30 percent	7.5300	7.6600	-0.1300
Ratio of top 10 percent over bottom 10 percent	19.1800	20.0900	-0.9100
Gini Coefficient	**0.4564**	**0.4605**	**-0.0041**

SOURCE OF BASIC DATA: NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE (NSO)
A/ - BASED ON THE COMPUTATIONS MADE BY THE NSCB TECHNICAL STAFF.
B/ - ALL COMPUTATIONS MADE WERE IN NOMINAL TERMS AS THE PUBLIC USE FILE (PUF) OF THE 2006 FIES, WHICH IS NEEDED TO COMPUTE FOR EACH HOUSEHOLD'S INCOME IN REAL TERMS, IS NOT YET AVAILABLE.

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GMA wants execs in scams punished

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO wants government officials who benefited from alleged irregular transactions in projects related to the Cebu hosting of the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit be held accountable.

The President wanted all those involved in alleged anomalies in the implementation of the multibillion-peso Asean summit projects prosecuted and punished, Presidential Management Staff head Cerge Remonde said here Friday.

The President also wanted no cover-up in the investigation, Remonde added.

"As the President promised, let the chips fall where they may… that is why those who are charged must face the full brunt of the law. There must be no cover-ups," Remonde said.

Remonde accompanied the President in Cebu Friday where she distributed bags of goods to some 1,000 indigents in Cebu City and graced the launching of the coffee table book "Cebu Pride of Place."

Remonde said the President hoped the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas would finish its investigation soon and indict those officials who might be involved in irregular transactions.

Remonde, however, declined to comment on a Commission on Audit finding which showed that almost P200 million of the budget for Asean-related projects was used by the Department of Public Works and Highways for road projects in areas like Siquijor that did not host the summit.

Remonde said they would rather wait for the outcome of the investigation by the Ombudsman.

At least 16 maintenance projects for national roads that were nowhere near the venues for the international event were included in the 36 items that were approved by the DPWH as projects related to the Asean summit, records obtained from the legal department of the DPWH Central Visayas showed.

Visayas Deputy Ombudsman Pelagio Apostol said he had already ordered the creation of a committee, headed by Assistant Deputy Ombudsman Virginia Palanca-Santiago, that would look into the implementation of all the Asean-related projects.

Santiago said the upgrading of the inquiry into formal graft cases against former DPWH Central Visayas regional Director Robert Lala and several others would not bar the antigraft office from including more officials should there be evidence against them.

JULIE S. ALIPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

LONE CHRISTMAS PAROL at the multipurpose center serves as inspiration for children of New Tuburan village as they excitedly await the first ever lighting of a Christmas tree in their village.

Solar power brings light to Dawn Mass in Zambo Sur village

NEW TUBURAN, TIGBAO, Zamboanga del Sur—Simbang Gabi for the people of this village always meant walking to the church with torches in hand to light their way.

But this year would be different. The torches would not be lighted anymore, at least for those residing in two adjoining communities here.

In March, the Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy program (Amore), a US-funded program, installed solar-powered lamps in the communities.

For the residents, the coming of solar energy was very welcome, considering that they can now also work even at night.

For children like 13-year-old Johnny Cumayas Magsanay, gone are days of the dark Simbang Gabi.

Johnny, a Grade 4 pupil at the New Tuburan Primary School, said the solar power provided a new kind of Christmas for the villagers.

He said unlike in the past, their Christmas nights are also more special this year because the community Christmas tree, which he and his classmates are always excited about, now features blinking lights.

"I will have more time to watch our community Christmas tree and its blinking lights at night and we will finally have parties here," he said while engrossed in basket weaving.

Pointing to his work, Johnny said he could now also help weave during night time, unlike before when he and his parents only work during the day.

For so many years, electricity eluded the village even if it was only about 8 km from the town proper.

"We can now finish weaving during night time and my father or mother could go to town early dawn to sell our produce," Johnny said.

Aside from the excitement over the Simbang Gabi and the lighted Christmas tree, Johnny said he and his classmates could now also go into caroling.

He said in the past, they could not do it because it was dark at night.

For Julian Magsanay, Johnny's father, the solar power means more than experiencing a lighted Christmas. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Police seize toy guns in raids in 2 cities

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—INTELLIGENCE operatives of the Negros Occidental Police Provincial Office (Noppo) simultaneously raided on Friday market stalls selling gun replicas in Silay and Talisay cities.

The Noppo Special Operations Group members, led by Senior Insp. Rico Santotome, assisted by the Talisay and Silay policemen, swooped down on 10 market stalls and confiscated 128 toy guns that could be mistaken for original firearms, and estimated to have a value of P10,000.

Santotome said persons engaged in selling gun replicas may be held liable and penalized under Presidential Letter of Instruction No. 1264.

He said the renewed campaign against the proliferation of toy guns was the response of the Philippine National Police to the public concern over reports that criminal elements might use these gun replicas in holdups and robberies, especially this Christmas season.

The police were also responding to concerns about children who mistake real guns for toy guns, resulting in accidental firing and in some instances, deaths.

The confiscated gun replicas are now stored at the Camp Alfredo Montelibano Sr., the Noppo's headquarters in Bacolod City.

Army stops NPA plan to blow up cell sites

LUCENA CITY—Government soldiers foiled a New People's Army plan to sabotage the operations of private communication firms in Quezon province Saturday, according to the military regional spokesperson.

Maj. Randolph Cabangbang, spokesperson of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here, said that at around 9 a.m. Saturday, troopers from the Army's 76th Infantry Battalion, headed by Lt. Col. Rommel Tello, chanced upon an estimated 50 fully armed communist rebels in the vicinity of the villages of Paang Bundok, Ilaya and Ilusong in Plaridel town fronting Lamon Bay.

He said heavy gunfight ensued between soldiers and communist guerrillas, after which the rebels retreated.

"Apparently, the communist terrorists were planning to sabotage cell sites within the vicinity of the encounter site," Cabangbang said.

He said government forces suffered no casualties in the encounter.

"There were signs of enemy casualties based on the blood stains along the escape routes and information provided by residents along the escape trails," the Solcom spokesperson said.

He said government forces were pursuing the rebels.

Cabangbang said concerned residents tipped off to the military the presence of an armed group in the area.

On Thursday, President Macapagal-Arroyo approved a three-week suspension of offensive military operations against communist rebels, which begins midnight of Dec. 16 and ends midnight of Jan. 6, 2008. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Must be currently enroled in a college or university with a General Weighted Average (GWA) of 2.25 or 85% equivalent with no failing mark in the preceding semester

Must be a first time traveler to Japan and/or must not have been a grantee or recipient of any NYC funded international travel or Japanese Government grant

Must be knowledgeable of the history, geography, culture and arts, and current issues on the Philippines and fairly knowledgeable about Japan and other East Asian Countries

Must be an officer or an active member of a youth organization at least one (1) year immediately preceeding the date of application

Must be willing to be an active NYC volunteer after the program to be covered by an appropriate Memorandum of Agreement and to continue to promote the learnings about Japan and the Japanese culture gained from the JENESYS Programme

Requirements

Two (2) copies of the application forms with passport sized photos with white background attached to each form (all original, no scanned photos)

Two (2) copies of resume, not more than three (3) pages

Two (2) copies of Certificate of Good Moral Character, issued by the school college or university (1 original and 1 photocopy)

Two (2) sets of certified copies of grades

Two (2) copies of Police or NBI clearance

Four (4) passport-sized photos (not scanned)

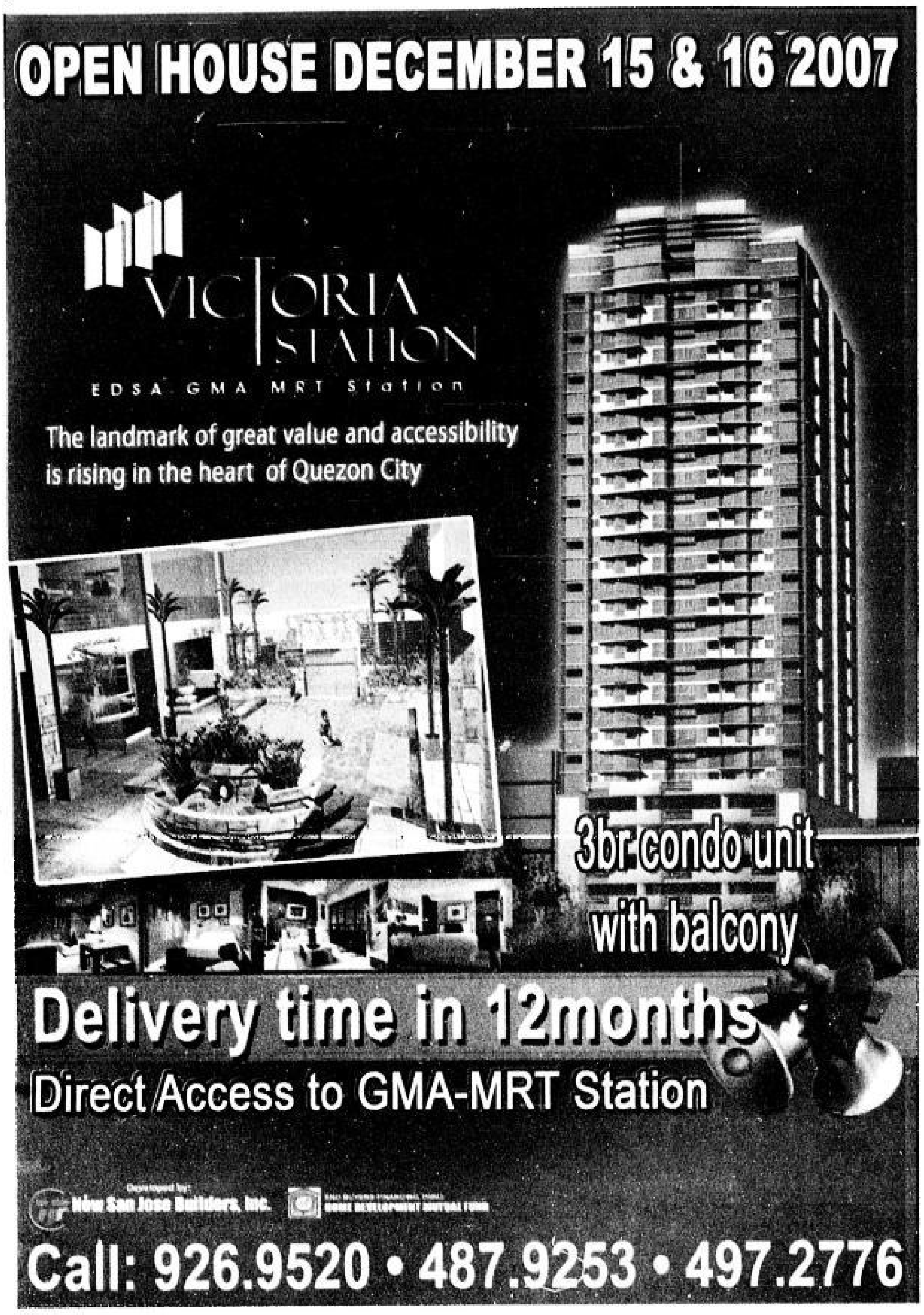
Completed NYC volunteer and JICC forms

Office of the President of the Philippines
National Youth Commission
4/F Bookman Building, 373 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
Telephone numbers (02)-781-1486 / (02)-781-2323
www.youth.net.ph

Deadline for submission of application is December 31, 2007

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Nico A. Alconaba**

INQUIRER Mindanao
E-mail: inq_davao@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/regions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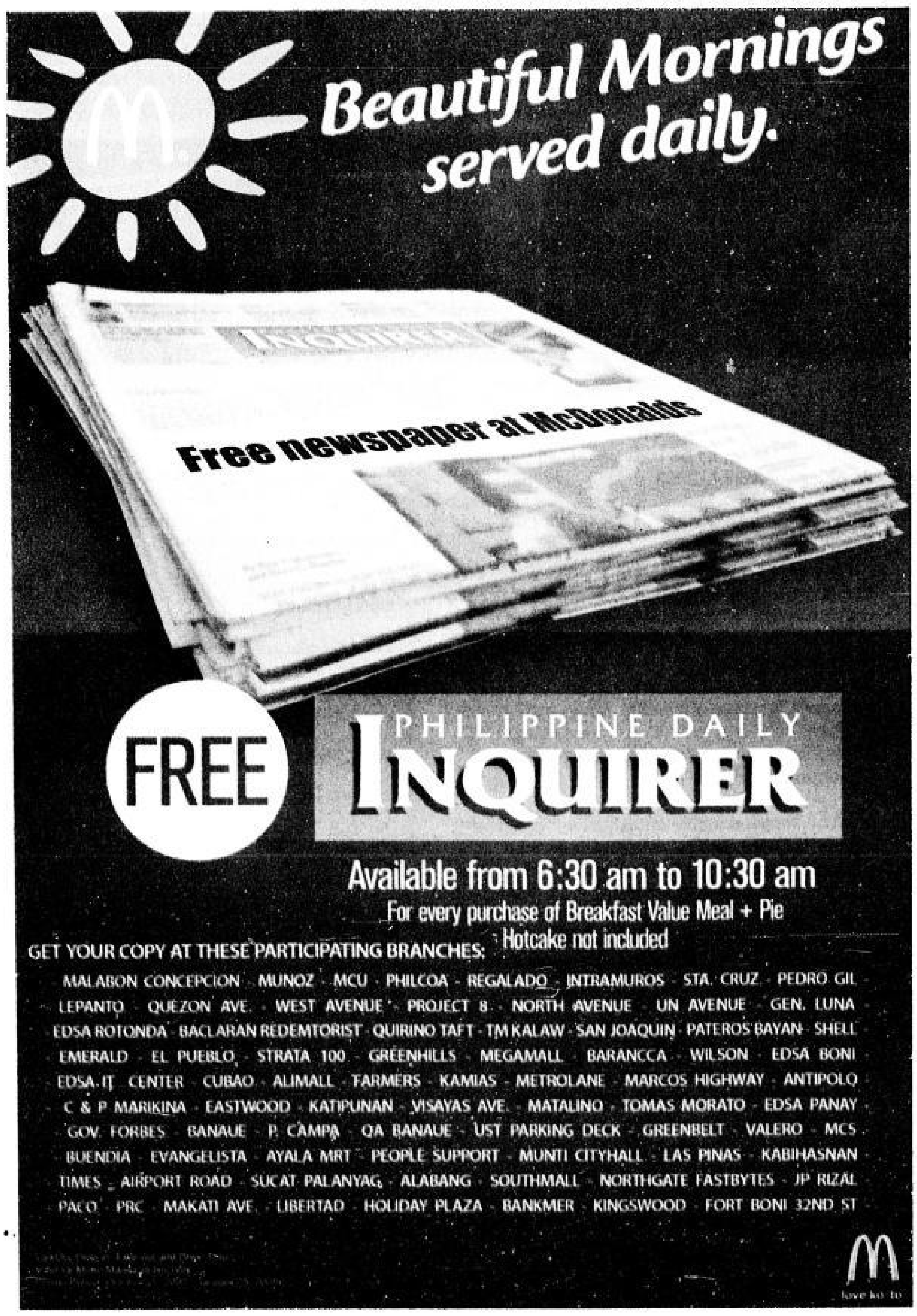
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love ko 'to

Relatives from all over the country and abroad came to pay tribute to this woman of substance who continues to walk her talk

LOLA Doni right after the papal awarding ceremony last July. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Centenarian rosary maker papal awardee

By **Romel M. Oribe**
Contributor

I STAND AND WATCH AS SHE does her craft on a wheelchair that's quite big for her birdlike frame.

She adds a length of chain to the jump ring attached to a crucifix she's holding and closes it. She then "builds" the center by attaching three small jump rings to each side of the center, adding a length of chain to each, and then closing each jump ring securely.

Beginning with the chain attached to the crucifix, she adds one "Our Father" bead, opens the other end of the eye pin, and adds a length of chain. She adds three "Hail Mary" beads and leaves the last eye pin open, then adds a length of chain to attach the next "Our Father" bead.

After making sure all eye pins are securely closed, she looks up and smiles at me.

Dionisia Portillo Lozada may have turned 100 years old on Nov. 27 but she still makes rosaries that she gives as presents to relatives, friends and strangers. This and more make her everybody's Lola Doni.

Lola Doni's piety is inborn. Early in her life she wanted to be a nun, a dream she pursued by paying the price of leaving Tago, her birthplace in Surigao del Sur, and be separated from her family at a young age to be a *graciada*—a working student with exceptional intelligence—at the St. Catherine School in Carcar, Cebu.

100-percent grade

There she finished high school with honors in 1926, even earning a grade of 100 percent in some subjects.

Lola Doni was all set to enter the nunnery in 1934, but her parents, Laureano Portillo and Facunda Prado, intervened. And so she went home and taught at the Santa Teresa School in Tandag, Surigao del Sur.

A year later, she transferred to the Purisima School in Tago and met Tomas C. Lozada, who became her husband on Dec. 7, 1935.

In 1944, she gave birth to Bobby, her fourth and only surviving child whom she raised single-handedly to become a successful lawyer, an executive and a businessman rolled into one.

She picks up the unfinished rosary that she had earlier put on the table beside her. She separates the "Our Father" bead by a length of chain and adds a decade consisting of 10 "Hail Mary" beads.

Lola Doni has her share of sorrows.

Her first three children died during their infancy and she herself became a widow when Bobby was only 6 years old. But her greatest agony was when Tommy and Maan, her only two grandchildren from Bobby and Emelyn, met their death aboard the ill-fated flight of Air Philippines seven Aprils ago. He was 25; she was 22.

Of this tragedy, Lola Doni felt sad but not resentful. She didn't ask God why this happened to her when she had been a good and faithful servant all her life.

She has served and extended material and financial support to the Church, championing the cause of the poor, and living a Spartan life despite her social status, becoming a catechist and active leader of organizations, like the Hijas de Maria, Apostolada, and Legion of Mary, and taking care of the Sto. Niño chapel in Lapaz among other works of mercy.

But such was not Lola Doni's ways. Instead, she asked God for more strength to continue her life's mission of serving Him through His church and His flock.

She completes four more sets of decades, each separated by an "Our Father" bead, except the last one, which she attaches directly to the other side of the center.

Exemplary service

On July 21, Lola Doni received from Pope Benedict XVI the papal award "Pro Ecclesia Et Pontificate," the most prestigious distinction and honor given to a devout Catholic for exemplary service to the Church and fellowmen.

Lola Doni accepted the award from the bishop of Tandag, Msgr. Nerio Odchimar, at the San Nicolas de Tolentino Cathedral in Tandag in an elaborate ceremony attended by relatives, friends, and church and government officials.

Four months later, on Nov. 30, three days after her birthday, the family of Lola Doni threw a grand fete worthy of a centenarian at the gym of the Polytechnic State College in Tago town.

Relatives from all over the country and abroad came and paid tribute to this woman of substance who continues to walk her talk even if she's now wheelchair-bound due to a bad fall that surgery wasn't able to correct.

Every time someone asks what her secret to a longer life is, Lola Doni always says: inner peace. But then she would blink her eyes that still have no use for glasses and smile, as if teasing that it couldn't get simpler and harder than that.

Just as she has perfected the craft of rosary making, Lola Doni has indeed perfected her life as a living offering to God. That's for 100 years and counting!

I stand and watch in awe as she makes the final assembly of the long string of beads and the centerpiece. She holds the string up by one end and lets it dangle freely.

After seeing no "twist" in the string, she attaches the free end of the centerpiece. And the rosary becomes whole.

E-mail the author at romeloribe@yahoo.com

Senate plans freedom of information rules

BAGUIO CITY—THE SENATE plans to smoothen the perceived friction between the media and the Arroyo administration by introducing a freedom of information act that seeks to compel government to reveal state secrets at the end of a prescriptive period.

Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr., chair of the Senate committee on public information and mass media, said he would sponsor the measure because assuring public access to information could help end the controversy that arose when police arrested 50 journalists covering the siege led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV of the Peninsula Manila hotel in Makati City on Nov. 29.

On Thursday, at a Senate inquiry looking into the media arrests, journalists said the arrests undermined their constitutional mandate to inform the public.

Revilla, who was here for the Metro Manila Film Festival, said he believed journalists need some measure of control.

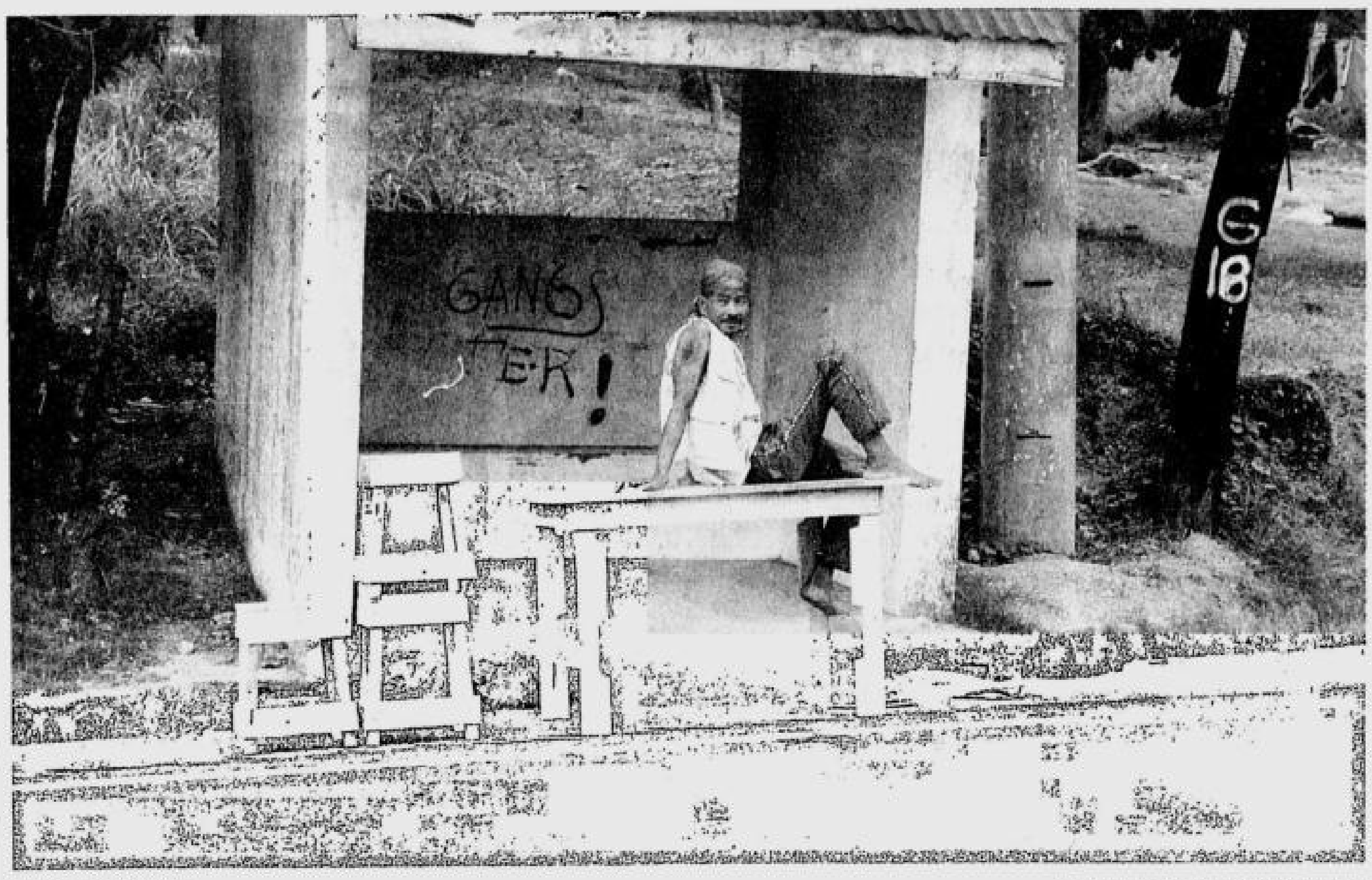
"We recognize the freedom of the press… *karapatan iyan, nasa Saligang Batas. Pero siyempre, ibalanse nating lahat.* There are times *na sumosobra kaya kailangang* may pang counter check (That's a right enshrined by the Constitution, but of course, that right needs to be balanced. There are times it is abused so government needs something to check media)," he said.

"Maybe this is why many media men are at risk, because the people they attack have no way of responding and have no recourse open to them to stop media harassments," he said.

He said his committee has scheduled hearings in January on a measure filed by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada that seeks to create a magna carta for journalists.

He said he has dovetailed these hearings with a committee study to support a "right-to-reply" measure authored by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon



WOODWORK

TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

A man displays wooden tables and chairs that he made in front of a waiting shed in Barangay Libis, Olongapo City, hoping to sell them to motorists that pass by.

More gold came from small-scale mines—DENR

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE high gold production of the country's small-scale mining has left the government with no choice but to abandon its lukewarm attitude toward the industry and recognize its role in the national economy, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau chief said.

Horacio Ramos said the government had been confronted with health and environmental issues related to small-scale mining but it could not deny the sector's contribution as a major dollar earner.

"Since the 1980s, the Philippines has been wrestling with the dilemma of small-scale mining," he said.

"Addressing the dilemma means freeing small-scale mining from the negative cycle of cause and effect. Most of the harmful effects of small-scale mining cannot be eliminated," Ramos said in a speech read for him by Neoman de la Cruz, MGB director in the Cordillera.

Ramos was invited as guest of honor of the province's 5th Small-Scale Mining Congress at the Benguet State University (BSU) here on Saturday.

In his speech, he said: "Small-scale mining is a highly controversial activity that means different to people. For some, it is dirty, dangerous and destructive. For others, it is productive and profitable."

"Its negative environmental and social effects are often associated with small-scale gold mining especially when mercury or cyanide is used," he said.

But the impact of the sector's gold production cannot be denied in the light of the government's bid to revive the mining industry, Ramos said.

"Since the mid-1990s, small-scale mining has produced more gold than large-scale mining," he said.

In fact, Ramos said, around 200,000 people are engaged in SSM, which is higher than the 140,000 people employed by large-scale mining companies.

Lomino Kaniteng, Benguet Federation of Small-Scale Miners Association (BFSSMA) president, said SSM produced 3.5 tons of gold worth P3 billion in 2006.

"The figure came from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which confirmed it is higher than the production of big mining firms," Kaniteng said.

"SSM is prevalent in over 30 countries and a source of income for around 13 million people and benefits between 80 million and 100 million people worldwide," Ramos said.

He said the "negative cycle of cause and effect" in small-scale mining was a result of inadequate mining and processing techniques that led to low metal recovery and low production.

The legalization of small-scale mining, through the enactment of the People's Small-Scale Mining Act of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7076) and the Local Government Code (RA 7160), was then a crucial first step in managing the impact of small-scale mining, he said.

"The laws allowed the decentralization of the giving of permits to the provincial or city mining regulatory boards, thus giving local units a new source of income," he said.

Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

Eagle chick hatched

DAVAO CITY—The prolific pair of eagles named Tsai and Princess Maasim produced another chick, the sixth surviving offspring of the birds, according to the Philippine Eagle Center here.

Dennis Salvador, director of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF), which runs the center, said the still unnamed eaglet weighed 155.9 grams when it cracked its shell on Dec. 7. It became the 22nd eagle bred and hatched in captivity since the PEF launched its breeding project a few years ago.

"The pair (Tsai and Princess Maasim) serves as the epitome of hope that the Philippine Eagle will continue to rule the skies and survive," Salvador said.

The Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) was declared one of the country's protected species after studies showed that there could only be 500 pairs left in the wild.

Joselle dR Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao

Cop chief dead after mishap

CEBU CITY—The police chief of Moalboal town southwest of Cebu City, died Dec. 12, a week after he figured in a motorcycle accident in Talisay City.

Moalboal police chief Insp. Gil Manriquez Limosnero, 47, a resident of San Fernando town, died at around 9 p.m. Wednesday at the South General Hospital in Naga City.

Limosnero was riding a motorcycle driven by a subordinate policeman, SPO2 Remberto Empeynado, and were on their way from Cebu City to Moalboal when the accident occurred at 11:20 p.m. on Dec. 5 in Barangay Lawaan, Talisay City.

Cebu Provincial Police Office director Senior Supt. Carmelo Valmoria said Limosnero was thrown off the motorcycle and landed on the pavement head first after one of the motorcycle's tires exploded.

Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas

Girl found dead in Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—An 11-year-old girl was found dead in a room her family was renting in Cabinet Hill here on Dec. 10, an apparent suicide.

Police said the girl's sister found her hanging by the window of their room. Her parents had told the police that the girl, complaining of stomachache, did not go to school that day.

They left her in the room but told the other boarders in the house to look after her as she was watching TV at that time.

The girl's 12-year-old sister arrived at about 5 p.m. and found the room locked. The sister climbed their neighbor's roof, which was near their room, and found her sister.

Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Ex-village chief slain

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A former barangay captain of Bacolor, Pampanga, was shot dead on Dec. 10, on the eve of the election for the chair of the Association of Barangay Captains in the town.

Almario "Mantu" Limpin, 54, died from three bullet wounds as he stood in front of his daughter's house at the Bulaon resettlement here at past 7 p.m.

The two men who attacked Limpin fled on a motorcycle, police said.

Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Cops nab slay suspect

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police on Dec. 7 arrested a former agent of the National Bureau of Investigation inside a girlie bar in Dasmariñas, Cavite, three days after he supposedly gunned down a councilor of the municipality.

Dasmariñas police chief Supt. Jose Marte Paras identified the suspect as Dante Reyna, 40, a native of Bayambang, Pangasinan and a resident of Barangay San Andres.

Paras said Dasmariñas policemen were conducting a security check on girlie bars and nightclubs along the Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Highway in Barangay San Andres at around 12:15 a.m. when they spotted the suspect inside the La Tash Bar.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

REVOLT
RESIGN

THE DEMAND for Ms Arroyo's resignation continues to be a theme in protest rallies during International Human Rights Day.

REM ZAMORA

East Visayas Church men lead 25 groups in quit GMA, Noli campaign

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A MULTI-sectoral organization composed of 25 groups in Eastern Visayas has started a campaign calling for the resignation of both President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro amid allegations of massive corruption and unsolved extrajudicial killings under the Arroyo administration.

In a statement, the Regional Alliance Mining, Large-Scale Logging and Corruption in Eastern Visayas (Ramilcor-EV), said aside from the "fundamental absence of legitimacy," the President has "lost all moral ascendancy in governing the country."

"Lying, corruption, bribery, unconcern about the poverty of the masses… these are what we have now in the government led by GMA and Noli," the group added in their statement.

"We know that GMA will not easily resign. But we also know that she will be forced eventually by this resignation campaign, if this is embraced by the majority of the people," the group added.

The call of the multi-sectoral group, which is headed by Sister Florence Laroco, OSB, for the President to resign came in the wake of a result of a Pulse Asia survey which tagged Ms Arroyo and her administration as the "most corrupt" in the nation's history.

> 'We know that GMA will not easily resign…'

The President was also accused of rigging the results of the 2004 elections, which had been used as one of the basis in two unsuccessful bids to impeach her.

Laroco said aside from issuing press statements, the group is also planning to stage protest rallies in the region to dramatize their call for the President to step down.

The group also blamed the administration of Ms Arroyo for extrajudicial killings, including those in Eastern Visayas.

The human rights group Karapatan has reported that 132 persons in the region, who were affiliated with militant and progressive groups, had been killed during the Arroyo presidency, with the military being blamed for these killings.

The military vigorously denied any involvement in the spate of unsolved disappearances and killings.

The Ramilcor-EV also denounced the operations of mining companies in the region.

"We want to join hands, link up our voices in exposing, opposing and condemning mining, quarrying, large-scale logging and corruption in Samar, Leyte and Biliran," the group said.

"We need more hands in our crusade to protect the wealth and riches of our land. We need a hundred more voices that will shout to high heavens the evil of exploitation by the few and powerful," their statement added.

MNLF softens resistance to peace pact with rivals

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO National Liberation Front (MNLF) is not worried about the reported existence of a draft of a final peace agreement that could be signed next year between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Unlike before when the MNLF sees the agreement on the borders of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity (BJE), the MILF-led territory, as a violation of the 1996 peace agreement between them and the government, it now sings a different tune.

Hatimil Hassan, MNLF interim vice chair, told the INQUIRER by phone Wednesday that they were supporting the government's ongoing peace talks with their brothers in the MILF.

"We are not against the reported draft of peace agreement. We are even supporting it so that the problem in Mindanao will finally have an end (to conflict)," Hassan said.

A source earlier told the INQUIRER the draft could be finalized after the negotiating panels meet for the last round of the exploratory talks in Kuala Lumpur in February.

The drafting of the pact could be a sign that the two sides were a step away from entering into an agreement.

Prof. Abhoud Syed Lingga, executive director of the Institute for Bangsamoro Studies, confirmed the existence of the draft peace agreement, but said there were two drafts, not one.

Eid Kabalu, MILF's civil-military affairs chief, confirmed Lingga's statement but declined to reveal the contents of the MILF draft because he is not in a position to discuss the matter.

The INQUIRER source, however, said the draft provides the enforcement of sharia in the BJE but only if people entangled in court cases choose to.

The MNLF softening came after a visit made by the son of Libyan ruler Moammar Ghadafi to leaders of the two Moro guerrilla groups. *Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

Bagong

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SPOTTERS AT WORK

How the (bird) race was won

By Elvira Mata

THE POET PABLO NERUDA wrote, "Bird by bird I've come to know the earth."

I am not a fan of Neruda or of bird watching but I do admire bird watchers because they can go on and on—like Energizer bunnies.

On Dec. 1 and 2, I attended the ROX Bird Race Challenge, the first bird race held in the Philippines, to find out more about bird watching.

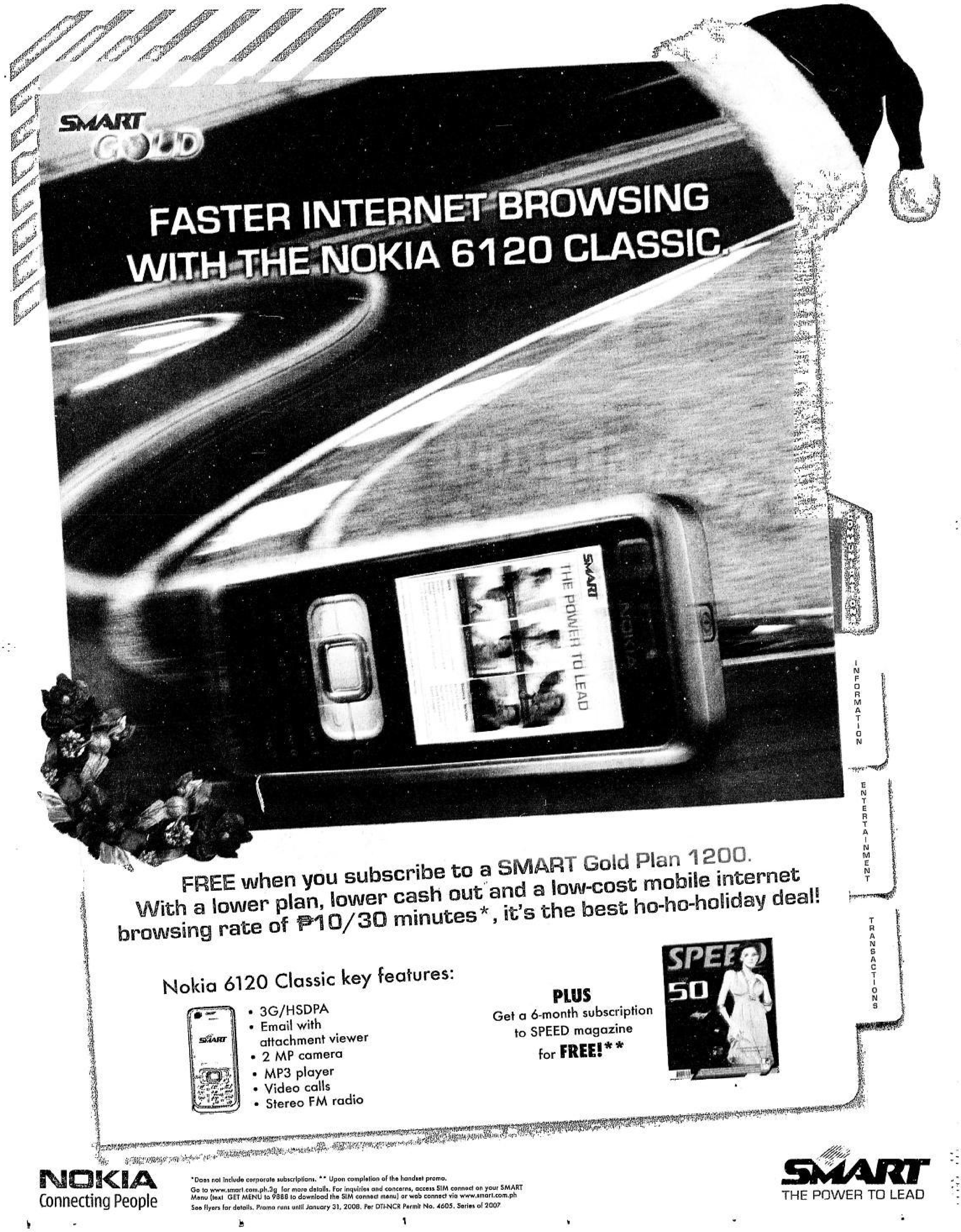
But first a definition of terms: Bird watching is a hobby where you observe birds in their natural habitat. A bird race is where teams of three to four bird watchers compete against each other in spotting, identifying and recording the most number of bird species within a given area. Like in golf, the honor system is used.

The best time to bird watch in Metro Manila is between October and early December because migratory birds from as far away as Siberia fly to the Philippines to escape the cold weather, according to Mike Lu, president of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines (WBCP) and bird race organizer.

Ten teams, with four members each (two must be WBCP mem-

HOW/ A20

READY, set, go (spot that bird)! AUGUST DELA CRUZ



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SMART THE POWER TO LEAD

How the (bird) race was won

From page A19

LONG-TAILED shrike spotted at the UP National Institute of Geological Sciences. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

IMMATURE Black-crowned Night-heron seen at the Freedom Island mudflats on Cavite Coastal Road. RYAN LIM

bers and one must be a newbie in bird watching) met at the ROX building on Bonifacio High Street, Taguig City, in the afternoon of Dec. 1. Each team was named after a Philippine bird. There was Team Pipit, Labuyo, Kulasisi and so on. Newbie bird watchers were raffled off to each of the teams and the birding site for that day was announced—the National Institute of Geological Sciences and the Hardin ng mga Rosas on the University of the Philippines Diliman campus.

As soon as they finished writing their team name on their banner, they clocked in, ran to the parking lot, jumped into their cars and drove like the wind—traffic allowing.

Teams were given a list of 165 bird species sighted in Metro Manila. At the end of the day, they were supposed to tick the species they had spotted and how many of each they had seen.

Participants were armed with the basic bird watching equipment: binoculars, a field guide ("The Guide to the Birds of the Philippines" by Robert S. Kennedy), paper and pen, hat, water and nuts or a PowerBar for energy. Most wore hiking shoes, cargo pants and long-sleeved shirts for protection from insects, razor-sharp grass and sunburn.

Many of the teams left on or around 3 p.m., arriving at record speed on the UP Diliman campus at 3:30 p.m. This was where some teams spotted the rare Eurasian Krestel. The most common bird species seen was the Eurasian tree swallow popularly known as *maya*. Birders then called it a day at dusk.

While the first day was a walk in the park, the second day started at 6 a.m. and ended at 1 p.m. It was hot and it turned out to be hell, at least for me, since I didn't get enough sleep and didn't bring enough water.

This time, there were three sites: The Tambo grasslands behind Coastal Mall at the end of Roxas Boulevard, the Freedom Island mudflats off the Cavite Coastal Road and the area behind the Manila Film Center at the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex.

Bird watching is best done in the late afternoon or early morning, because this is when birds feed. So it came as no surprise that one team was at the Tambo grasslands at 5 a.m. waiting for the grass owl. Sorry, the bird was a no show.

Another team took note of the tides, because more birds would come out to feed during low tide.

At the outset, the teams were competitive, but on the second day, everyone was having a good time, birding together as a pack.

Did you see the Philippine duck? asked one team of the other. No? Well, they flew over that way. And the other team would start scouring the sky and the bushes.

The Philippine duck is a threatened species found only in the country (thus, the name). They have been sighted around Freedom Island, which is why the area was declared by President Macapagal-Arroyo as a Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area in April this year.

The birds I saw using the marshal's spotting scope were: Common sandpiper, Asian golden plover, Common moorhen, Grey herons, Great egrets, Little egrets, Whiskered tern, the Black-crowned Night heron, Yellow bittern and a White-collared kingfisher.

Of course, the bird watchers saw more.

At noon, we all drove to the Manila Film Center, where surprise, surprise—the teams brought food to share. Someone even brought brown rice and *adobo*. Another brought a carton of Gatorade, which hit the right spot after six hours of birding.

And the winners are: Team Lawin with members Melanie Tan, a member of an environmental nongovernment organization; Nielsen Donato, veterinarian of Vets in Practice, and Esteven Toledo, a veterinarian assigned at the environment department's Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau. Their adopted newbie is Jose Maria Paras, a senior UP law student. Collectively, they saw 45 bird species.

How did they do it? Donato said they concentrated on the common species while the other teams were looking for rare birds.

Teams Syokot and Kulasisi tied for best teamwork while the most promising new birders were Carol Donato, Cynthia de Jesus and Ricky Nunez.

LITTLE egrets at the Freedom Island mudflats. RYAN LIM

THE BIRD "stalkers" in action at the Coastal Lagoon, Coastal Road. RYAN LIM

(FRONT ROW, from left) Program host Andrew Galano poses with the 1st ROX Bird Race Challenge winners: Team Lawin members Jose Maria Paras, Esteven Toledo, Nielsen Donato and Melanie Tan, WBCP officer Anna Gonzales and ROX marketing manager Roel Chan. (Back row, from left) Judges Arne Jensen and Aldrin Mallari with WBCP president Mike Lu. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

We're sharing that number one feeling!

Informing and inspiring Filipino readers for more than two decades through balanced news and fearless views, the Philippine Daily Inquirer has undoubtedly become the country's number 1 newspaper. Our heartfelt thanks for making the Inquirer a part of your daily reading habit.

As we celebrate our 22nd anniversary, Inquirer grants 22 loyal readers their wishes – from an exciting wish like meeting your local idol to a romantic one like celebrating your 25th wedding anniversary in a beach resort. Let us know what you really want. In 300 words or less, tell us:

1) How long have you been reading the Philippine Daily Inquirer?
2) What do you like most about the Inquirer, and we dare ask, what do you like least?
3) What is your number 1 wish that Inquirer can grant you, and why?

[illegible]

INQUIRER

"I WAS a singer in a nightspot called Chimes in Singapore for at least a year. Apart from helping my family financially, my stint developed my personality. I became more confident performing for foreigners and my fellow OFWs as well."
MAU MARCELO, December 2007

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor **Gerry Lirio**

E-mail: pr_global_pinoy@inquirer.com.ph

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This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Banned from coming home for Christmas

By Pennie A. dela Cruz

For OFWs in Nigeria where a deployment ban is in place, the government has become the Grinch who stole Christmas. And all because DOLE doesn't know its geography, they rue

AZARCON (left) during a school sports competition in Nigeria: "It's not the first day of school that fills my mind, it is the longing to spend Christmas with my family in the Philippines."

PAOLO BUNDOC

FOR NIGERIA-BASED SCHOOLteacher Tess Azarcon, preparations for Christmas start in July.

"As soon as school closes first week of July, my countdown to Christmas begins," she recounted of her two previous yuletide holidays.

"From then on, every time I go shopping, I'm on the look out for *pasalubong* (homecoming presents) that will please my mother, my sisters and brother and assorted relatives. Will my sister like that dainty lace-trimmed lingerie? What about that perfumed body talc and those imported chocolates? Already, I imagine the squeals of delight that would greet my bag of goodies the moment I get home from the airport."

This year, this Abuja-based professional and thousands of Overseas Filipino Workers in Nigeria would have to subsist on imagination to celebrate Christmas with their families. Despite an earlier move on Nov. 17 to lift the ban on the deployment of OFWs to this West African nation, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion immediately restored the ban that has been in effect since January this year when several Filipino workers and other nationals were abducted in Nigeria's Delta region.

Remote, swampy area

The ban is uncalled for, said Azarcon. "I cannot understand why the government should hold us hostage for acts done in isolated areas far away from our place of work," she added. "This is a result of their ignorance of Nigeria's geography and as such, it is unforgiveable."

In an online petition and an open letter published as a paid advertisement in early November, Nigeria's OFWs pointed out that the kidnapping happened in a remote swampy area far from secure city centers where most Filipino workers are deployed.

"The government cares for our safety? Why? There is no war here that warrants such concern," Azarcon said. "To be honest, I feel safer here in Abuja than in Manila. I can use my mobile phone and wear expensive jewelry on the street anytime without fear of snatchers, and come home late at night without worrying about hold-uppers or rapists. When foreign colleagues leave for the holidays and I'm left alone in my flat inside an empty compound, I can still sleep soundly and safely."

Suspenseful wait to lift ban

What has kept her awake, she said, was the suspenseful waiting for the ban to be lifted, considering that like other OFWs, her Christmas plans have been in place since September this year.

"As the new term begins in September, it is not actually the first day of school that fills my mind," she said. "It is the 'ber' months, which means that very shortly now, I can once again go home and see the family, especially my widowed mother. She's old now and I've vowed to go home every year to give her some peace of mind about my safety and assure her that we can still spend time together."

The ban imposed on OFWs going to Nigeria since January had been a minor concern, she said. "We've always thought things would improve and the ban would be lifted. It's been so long and the kidnapping was an isolated case that involved other nationals, not just Filipinos."

But just to be sure, the OFWs in Nigeria chipped in $20 each for the open letter and paid ad to state their case on why the ban should be lifted. Among other points, the open letter suggested that being the government's frontline source of information in the host country, the Philippine Embassy "can ascertain the real situation affecting the welfare of Philippine nationals in Nigeria and as such, could issue a certification that an OFW is employed and working in a safe and secured area in (Nigeria). This will allow the OFW to proceed on home leave or Christmas vacation with the assured return to the place of employment in Nigeria."

Lifting of ban short lived

The strategy seemed to work: Over Vice President Noli de Castro's radio program on Nov. 17, it was announced that the ban had been partially lifted, with OFWs already in Nigeria allowed back after their Christmas leave.

"There was great rejoicing in the Papal Nunciature where Filipinos attend Mass on Saturday evenings," recounted Azarcon.

"Everyone was all smiles and there was a lot of back slapping. The other nationals commented on how good it was to see Filipinos cheerful and smiling once more. For the longest time, there was a pall of gloom over Filipino gatherings because of the uncertainty of our Christmas celebrations. But that evening, all of us were in high spirits. Upon getting home, we eagerly called up other Pinoys to share the good news."

The celebration turned out to be short-lived. The next day, claiming that the matter needed further study, Secretary Brion restored the ban. "Everyone was stunned," said Azarcon. "We could not understand how a decision that affects several thousand OFWs can suddenly be changed overnight. It was a very sad day for us. "

For weeks after, she added, Filipinos in Nigeria e-mailed and called each other up, hoping for a break. "But nothing! The government does not seem to care that we've spent hundreds of thousands of hard-earned cash on newspaper ads and then some more in service charges when we refunded our tickets, not to mention our heartache and disappointment and that of our families. And still, nothing! No acknowledgment at all of the pain they've caused us, no apologies, no explanation."

Disgust with government

She recounted how, at the Filipino Food Fair and Bazaar held at the Philippine Embassy on Nov. 25, the OFWs were subdued. "One group of Filipino engineers in one table couldn't help but shed tears, and that's without them drinking even a drop of wine!" she recalled. "I know that when they get back to their flats, more OFWs would do the same because they had so looked forward to spending Christmas with their families after a year of sacrifice."

She feels the same, she said, except that her disappointment is heavily tinged with disgust with the government. "We have become the laughing stock of the international community here, with them asking us why our government has overreacted. They could have just issued a strong advisory against travel to Nigeria. Don't they know that it is against human rights to prevent people from seeking work in a place of their choice?"

Holiday cheers stolen

At the moment, said Azarcon, her Christmas spirit has been dampened with "bitterness towards the government," that has "unthinkingly and seriously" stolen their holiday cheer this year. "You will always owe us this one Christmas in our life and the life of our loved ones," she said darkly of the government's Grinch-like stance.

Otherwise, she adds, the government's description of them as the country's "New Heroes" whose $12.8 billion remittances last year have empowered the peso, would reveal itself as nothing but an empty paean.

Editor's note: The author is a sister of Tess Azarcon

ROBBED of yuletide cheers, Azarcon busies herself with her students during a Science field class in Abuja, Nigeria.

When does a child acquire US citizenship?

IMFO

Lourdes Santos Tancinco

RACHEL WAS BORN OUT OF wedlock in 1986. She is the daughter of a Filipina and a US Citizen who was then working for the US Air Force at Clark Air Force Base in Pampanga. Rachel grew up not knowing who her real father was.

In 2005, Rachel met her American father, James, for the first time when he returned to the Philippines. James decided he'd give Rachel a good future by bringing her with him to the United States. James applied for a US passport for Rachel as a child of a US citizen. His application was denied. James re-applied and at the time of Rachel's interview for her citizenship, she was already 21 years old. Rachel was denied again on the ground that James did not recognize Rachel before she turned 18 years old; and, also because the other requirements for derivate US citizenship were not met.

What are the chances of Rachel getting a US passport based on her blood relationship to her American father?

Derivative citizenship

Generally, all persons born in the US are citizens at birth. Children of US citizens who are born outside the United States may derive citizenship upon application filed by the US citizen parent.

The Child Citizenship Act of 2001 expanded the ways by which a child born outside the US may become a US citizen. A child derives US citizenship if one parent is a US citizen, by birth or naturalization; the child is under 18 years old, is a lawful permanent resident of the US and is residing in the US in the legal and physical custody of the US citizen parent.

Illegitimate children

For children born outside the US, and who are born out of wedlock (meaning their parents are not married), different specific rules apply.

Under the 1986 law, a child born out of wedlock may acquire citizenship at birth if (1) a blood relationship between the child and the father has been established by clear and convincing evidence; (2) the father is a US citizen at time of birth of the child; (3) father agreed to support the child until the latter reaches 18; and (4) before the child turned 18, the father must have acknowledged paternity of the child or must have legitimated the child before he or she turned 18 years old according to the law where the child or father is a domicile.

Green card first

To legitimize a child or acknowledge the paternity of a child is an important requirement for children who are born out of wedlock. The age limit of 18 years old is a must for the child to derive US citizenship. If the child has been recognized before 18 years old, then he or she can be a derivative US citizen.

If the US citizen parent recognizes paternity only after the child has turned 18 years old, then that child may still be petitioned as a green card holder but no longer as a derivative US citizen child. What the US citizen parent could do is then to file an immediate relative petition for the child before the child turns 21 years old so that the child will qualify immediately for a green card.

However, if the child is already more than 21 years old, the US citizen parent may still file an immediate relative petition as long as there is a bona fide father-child relationship when the child was under 21 years old and the child is still single. A bona fide relationship exists "where the father demonstrates or has demonstrated an active concern for the child's support, instruction and general welfare."

Parental responsibility key

As in the case of Rachel, while she was not legitimated before she turned 18 years old, there was evidence that, at some point, when she was a minor, her father sent financial support to her through the mother. This support was discontinued for some reason until the father met Rachel again in 2005.

Prior financial support may be proof of bona fide relationship allowing Rachel to become a beneficiary of a petition by her US citizen father. It will take many years before she resides in the US because the petition for adult children of US citizens takes longer than 10 years. Rachel could have been a US citizen were it not for the neglect of her American father.

It is, thus, important for parents to acknowledge their responsibilities even if they are abroad in order to avoid depriving children of their future option of going abroad to better their lives.

(Tancinco may be reached at law@tancinco.com or at (02) 887-7177).

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Musharraf lifts Pakistan emergency rule

ISLAMABAD—PAKISTANI PRESIDENT PERVEZ Musharraf lifted emergency rule on Saturday in a move Western nations hope will stabilize the nuclear-armed state as Islamic militant violence spirals.

Musharraf will address the nation on TV and radio on Saturday night. But critics say curbs on the media and judiciary mean that he can still manipulate a Jan. 8 general election win for his allies and secure a power base despite his unpopularity.

"Yes, the emergency has been lifted," said a government official who declined to be identified.

Citing spiraling militant violence, Musharraf imposed the emergency on Nov. 3, suspended the constitution and purged the Supreme Court to fend off challenges to his reelection, which new hand-picked judges have since rubber-stamped.

Two soldiers and three civilians were killed near a Pakistani army camp by a suicide bomber on a bicycle on Saturday, underscoring a growing number of insurgent attacks this year in which hundreds of people have been killed.

Facing international condemnation, including from his ally the United States, Musharraf had said he would restore the constitution.

But some lawyers and judges, including Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, who were deposed by Musharraf are still under house arrest. The Pakistani media criticized this week a ban on live broadcasts as an attempt to control election coverage.

The end of the emergency may not change that.

"This emergency was staged to perpetuate one-man rule," said Akbar Ali, an employee at a car leasing company in the main northwestern city of Peshawar.

"He has got it done and it's now useless if emergency rule stays or is removed. There is no guarantee he won't stage this emergency again if he sees his rule in danger."

Election monitors and many politicians fear Musharraf, despite calls for a fair vote, can rig the polls through a network of district chiefs, bogus votes and by excluding opposition supporters from ballot stations.

Critics point out that Musharraf, who came to power in a 1999 coup but stepped down as army chief last month, still lives in his army house.

The election is essentially a three-way battle between parties loyal to Musharraf and the parties of two main opposition leaders, former prime ministers Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto.

An opposition-run parliament could move to impeach the general over accusations he acted unconstitutionally in securing a new term as president.

With political rallies banned, parties have been holding what they call smaller "meetings" to get round the regulations.

The opposition hopes that bigger rallies would be allowed as the campaign gets into gear after the weekend. *Reuters*

Clinton no longer 'invincible,' scrambles for votes

CLINTON

GETTY IMAGES/AFP

JOHNSTON—HER AURA OF inevitability dimmed, Hillary Clinton's once pitch-perfect White House campaign is in a battle of attrition against peaking rival Barack Obama.

Beset by sliding poll numbers and claims she is stooping to dirty politics just 19 days before Iowa holds first party nominating contests, the Clinton machine faces a battle for a party ticket it once seemed to have sewn up.

After months in the lead, Clinton is being forced to deny warnings by pundits that her campaign is in trouble.

"If I had listened to ... the Washington chattering class, I would not be standing here, would I?" Clinton told reporters Friday.

"I believe in trusting my own instincts. I feel very, very good about the case that I am making."

Clinton rejects the notion she was ever the "inevitable" nominee, despite the characterization featuring in almost every media analysis of her campaign until early November.

"I always said this would get close. That's what happens in a contested election," she told Iowa Public Television.

Vowing to work harder than any other candidate, Clinton sets off this weekend on a five-day "mad dash" through Iowa's 99 counties, by helicopter to whip up her supporters ahead of the caucuses on Jan. 3.

She could use a break after six weeks of woe, and seeing charismatic rival Obama eat up her poll leads in several key states.

Battered by a shaky debate performance in Philadelphia on Oct. 30, and accusations her campaign was planting questions at her events, the campaign tripped up again this week over a drugs slur against Obama.

So, Clinton was forced on the tarmac of Washington's Reagan National airport to apologize to a rival she once treated as political roadkill.

Political adviser Bill Shaheen, a powerplayer in New Hampshire, which holds its critical primary election on Jan. 8, had raised questions about Obama's dabbling in drugs as a teenager, which he admitted in a memoir.

"It'll be, 'When was the last time? Did you ever give drugs to anyone? Did you sell them to anyone?'" Shaheen told the Washington Post, warning how Republicans would prey on the first term senator.

Amid the uproar, Shaheen resigned, but some cynics noted he may have served a purpose by raising doubts about Obama's electoral vulnerability, as the Illinois senator's campaign accused Clinton of desperation of bad polls.

While some opinion surveys have tightened into a virtual dead-heat in Iowa and New Hampshire, Clinton still enjoys a gaping lead over Obama in national polls.

But the impact on the Clinton campaign of a defeat in New Hampshire or Iowa on her support elsewhere is unknown.

The latest New Hampshire poll by the Concord Monitor newspaper showed Obama up by one percentage point, with 32 percent support, after having trailed her for months.

But a Fox News poll on Friday suggested speculation about a Clinton meltdown was premature, handing her a 34-percent to 25-percent lead over Obama in New Hampshire, with former vice presidential nominee John Edwards on 15 percent.

In Iowa, the race is a statistical dead heat, although several recent polls have given Obama a slim lead.

In the run up to the Iowa caucuses, Clinton is sharpening a two-pronged message—that she is best qualified to be president, and has the best chance of slaying a Republican to get elected.

She is also dismissing reports that former president Bill Clinton was anxious about her prospects, and was plotting a campaign shake-up. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

N. Korea replies to Bush letter with an offer

KIM JONG-IL REUTERS

WASHINGTON—Responding to a recent letter from President Bush, North Korea agreed Friday to follow through on its pledge to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, provided the United States reciprocates by normalizing relations between the countries. Bush said Friday that his initial letter, which was delivered by Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill to the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il, on Dec. 5, achieved its purpose. "I got his attention with a letter, and he can get my attention by fully disclosing his programs, including any plutonium he may have processed and converted some of that into whatever he's used it for. We just need to know," Bush told reporters in the Rose Garden after a Cabinet meeting. "As well, he can get our attention by fully disclosing his proliferation activities." North Korea agreed in October to dismantle all of its nuclear facilities and to disclose all of its past and present nuclear programs by the end of the year in return for 950,000 metric tons of fuel oil or its equivalent in economic aid. *NYT*

Al-Qaida's No. 2 blasts Annapolis summit

CAIRO, Egypt—Al-Qaida's No. 2 Ayman al-Zawahri said last month's US-sponsored Mideast peace conference was a "betrayal" aimed at selling out the Palestinians in a new message, the terror group's first reaction to the gathering. The audiotape released Friday by Osama bin Laden's deputy was the latest al-Qaida attempt to rally Muslims behind it by using the widespread bitterness felt toward Israel over the Palestinian issue. Al-Zawahri focused his anger against Egypt, a top US ally and the first Arab country to sign a peace deal with Israel, calling on Bedouin in Egypt to rise up against the rule of President Hosni Mubarak. The Nov. 27 peace conference in Annapolis, Maryland, relaunched Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and was attended by most Arab nations, including leading players Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria—despite their initial reluctance to participate in a gathering many Arabs worried would not commit Israel to making concessions. *AP*

2 Indian students killed in US campus

BATON ROUGE, Louisiana—Two doctoral students from India were found shot to death in a home invasion at a Louisiana State University apartment, and officials decided to keep the campus open while police searched for three suspects. The victims, Chandrasekhar Reddy Komma, 31, of Kurnool, and Kiran Kumar Allam, 33, of Hyderabad, were found inside an apartment at the Edward Gay complex late Thursday night after authorities received an emergency call. Police patrols were increased on the 28,000-student campus on Friday and students were told to be cautious, but the university was not locked down. Students were taking the last of their final exams, and many had already left for the semester. *AP*

Owners of ship post $79.5M `bail' for oil spill

SAN FRANCISCO—The Hong Kong-based owner of a ship that spilled oil in San Francisco Bay has paid the federal government nearly $80 million as bail of sorts while US officials seek a civil judgment, the Justice Department said on Friday. The government asked for and received $79.5 million—the full value of the ship—as the maritime equivalent of a release bond, said Andrew Ames, a department spokesperson. The container ship Cosco Busan struck a support on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge as it headed for South Korea on Nov. 7, spilling 220,000 liters of oil into the fragile bay. The spill killed thousands of birds and closed more than a dozen beaches. The deposit eliminates the government's threat to seize the vessel, which could have cost taxpayers significant money, Ames said. *AP*

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The TESLAR Effect may "help compensate for some of the negative impact of using a cell phone"*

In June 2002, Alternative Medicine Magazine conducted independent product testing which demonstrated that TESLAR may have a positive effect on the human body in the presence of a cell phone. This text measured Heart Rate Variability (HRV), which can be a good measurement of a body's overall response to external stress. This product test concluded that the use of TESLAR "may in fact compensate for some of the negative impact of using a cell phone."

While wearing TESLAR, results suggest a "stabilizing effect" on or even "beneficial stimulation" of nervous system activity.

Immune cell production increases in presence of the TESLAR Effect in laboratory experiment*

Dr. Glen Rein, while at Stanford Medical School, showed that in the presence of TESLAR there was, on average, 137% enhancement of human immune cell growth (in-vitro). A separate test demonstrated that nerve cells (in-vitro) could inhibit their uptake if noradrenalin (a depression-fighting process) by as much as 19.5% in the presence of TESLAR.

Children wearing TESLAR in a recent pilot study showed improved concentration*

In 2001, a 30-day study of 11 children with hyperactivity and attention problems was completed in Henderson, KY. Students were evaluated by teachers prior to beginning the study and again at the conclusion. Overall, per teachers' observations, students showed improvements in their ability to concentrate, play respectfully with other children, relate to adults, and respect authority, among other indicators.

In 2003, Dr. Nyjon Eccles, MD, saw similar results on patients. Dr Eccles' HRV tests showed that without TESLAR the nervous system can become stressed when exposed to an energized cellphone. While wearing TESLAR results suggest a "stabilizing effect" on or even "beneficial stimulation" of nervous system activity.

The TESLAR Effect may result in "improved cardiovascular fitness"*

In 2005, a Heart Rate Variability study (i.e. Stress Test) published in Explore! Magazine suggests TESLAR wearers may experience a more balanced Autonomic Nervous System related to cardiovascular fitness. Measurements suggest after wearing TESLAR test subjects experienced improved general cardiovascular fitness related to (1) relaxing the "fight or flight" response; (2) increasing "relaxation response"; and (3) improving adaptability to external users.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

After diving into a nightmare, Asok feels like gold anew /A24

Sunday SPORTS

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Celtics home roll continues; Warriors score //A28

Humbling sixth spot for RP bets

From a high of 113 golds in 2005 to 41

By Ernesto A. Gonzales
Sports Features Editor

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—THE DEFEAT was expected but the transition from overall champion to a horrible sixth on Saturday was a humiliating experience that will long haunt the Philippines in the Southeast Asian Games.

With host Thailand overdoing itself and the other perennial medal contenders showing marked improvement, the defending champion Filipinos wound up with a puny gold medal output of 41 from a dizzying total of 113 in 2005, when they ruled this 11-nation sportsfest for the first time back home.

The country's final victory on Saturday came through divers Jaime Asok and Rexel Fabriga in the men's synchronized 10-meter platform as Cecil Mamiit failed to lift his teamup with different partners in the doubles to victory.

The dusky 31-year-old Mamiit and fellow Fil-Am Eric Taino took a 6-2, 6-4 loss in the men's doubles from Thai twins Sanchai and Sonchat Ratiwatana.

The Thais also humbled, in the team play early last week, the same RP combination that produced a bronze in the Asian Games last year in Doha, Qatar.

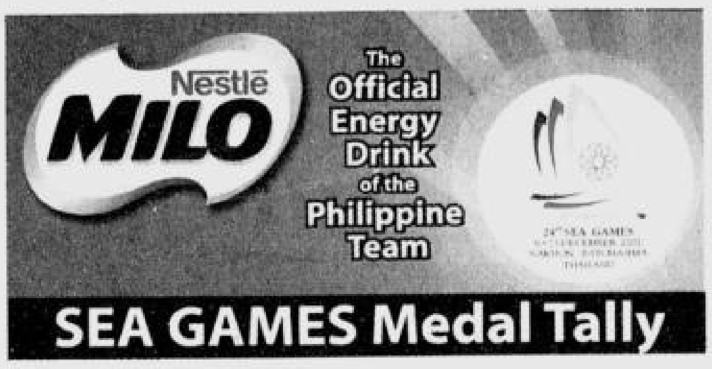
Mamiit, now the SEAG back-to-back men's singles champion, and Denise Dy then absorbed a 6-4, 7-6 (3) decision in the mixed doubles finals.

Deseree Autor and Sarah Jane Catain salvaged a bronze in the women's doubles of sepak takraw after Parley Tupaz and Rhovyl Verano dropped their men's beach volleyball match for third place to Cambodia's Chamnap Son and Sopheap Kong, 14-21, 21-11, 15-13.

The Filipinos, who will also be remembered in the 24th edition of the biennial sportsfest for turning the boxing finals into a farce, also finished with 91 silver and 96 bronze medals.

While officials had long conceded the overall title to Thailand, since it was deemed that the Thais could not dare lose on the 80th birth anniversary of their King Bhumibol Adulyadej, they were hoping to at least sal-

HUMBLING/A24



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SEA GAMES Medal Tally

COUNTRY	G	S	B	Total
Thailand	183	123	102	408
Malaysia	67	52	96	215
Vietnam	64	58	82	204
Indonesia	56	64	83	203
Singapore	43	42	41	126
Philippines	41	91	96	228
Myanmar	14	26	47	87
Laos	5	7	32	44
Cambodia	2	5	11	18
Brunei	1	1	4	6
Timor Leste	0	0	0	0

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MOUNTAIN BIKE (w/out shock)
SRP [illegible]
SALE P1,999.00

NODOR
- NODOR SUPABULL II DART BOARD
- NODOR JAVELIN BRASS DART PIN
MADE IN UK
STAPLE FREE BULLS EYE
MATERIAL: EAST AFRICAN SISAL
ROUND WIRE
SRP [illegible]
SALE P1,999.00

LA HOOPS
LA HOOPS JR 60030 BASKETBALL SET
SRP [illegible]
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BK-07 ELLIPTICAL STRIDER
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Humbling 6th place for RP bets

From page A23

vage third place or, worst, take fourth.

But they failed to cope up with the way the Thais overhauled the roster of events, where the Filipinos shone the last time, to boost their cause. Worse, the Filipinos fared just as badly in measurable sports as in events where they anticipated hometown bias because the medals are decided by judges.

The sixth-place finish was the country's worst since ending up second to last in a field of seven during its SEAG debut in 1977. Before their victory two years ago, the Filipinos placed second overall two times (1983 and l991) and third five times (1981, 1985, 1987, 1993 and 1995). They landed fourth four times and fifth three times.

"We prepared hard, but the rest prepared harder," Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and chair William "Butch" Ramirez echoed each other.

Cojuangco is president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, which prepared the athletes, while Ramirez is chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, which funded their training and participation.

Rep. Monico Puentevella, the delegation's chief of mission, said the debacle illustrated once more the lack of logistical support for the athletes and urged Congress to come up with measures to raise more funds for the international exposure of the national campaigners.

But they conveniently forgot to mention that the athletes didn't get the same attention from the government, unlike the last time when the First Gentleman Foundation of Jose Miguel Arroyo, President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, raised about P160 million just for the training and international stints of the SEAG bets.

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

This time, the PSC pursued the SEAG campaign on a P100 million budget.

At the end of their runaway domination, the Thais were clutching their biggest haul ever of 183 golds on top of 123 silvers and 102 bronzes in 42 events.

They easily surpassed their 157 golds when they hosted the SEAG in Chiang Mai in 1995 but were still off the 194 victories Indonesia pulled off in 34 events in Jakarta in 1997.

Malaysia was a surprise second overall with a gold-silver tally of 67-52-96, followed by Vietnam at 64-58-82; Indonesia at 56-64-83 and Singapore at 43-42-41.

While swimming churned out the worthiest performance by Filipinos with eight golds, including four victories by Miguel Molina, who became a leading candidate for the top male athlete award of the Games, athletics, wushu and taekwondo, which accounted for 27 golds in the 2005 Games, contributed only a total of 8 this time.

And the Filipinos were shut out in bowling, golf, karate, wrestling and traditional boat races after combining for 20 golds in Manila.

Boxing was another big disappointment not only because it finished with just a gold despite sending a total of 13 fighters to the final.

All seven male fighters were prevented from taking a shot at the gold medal—and ruined their two-year preparation for the SEAG – because amateur boxing president Manny Lopez felt they had no chance at the finals at all in the face of what officials perceived was biased judging.

It was the most deplorable display of unsportsmanlike conduct in the history of the SEAG.

The Filipinos also yielded the baseball title to the Thais and Ricky Yang of Indonesia beat Lee Van Corteza for the men's 9-ball singles crown.

Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont later presided over the closing ceremonies in the evening which featured the transfer of the SEAG flag to Laos, the host of the 25th edition in 2009 that will be known as the Vientiane Games.

DANICA Calapatan (main photo and inset) performs in the hoop event of rhythmic gymnastic at His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary Stadium in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand. Calapatan, fifth placer in the rope competition, also wound up fifth in the hoop. RAFFY LERMA

Heptathlete may lose medal over positive test

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—FILIPINO Narcisa Atienza is in danger of being stripped of her heptathlon bronze medal Saturday after testing positive for a banned performance-enhancing substance.

Games organizers, though, could not implement a sanction against the heptathlete since Atienza went home with the athletics delegation and was not available to give her testimony.

This marks the second straight Games that a Filipino stood in danger of losing a medal following taekwondo champion Esther Marie Singson's case in 2005.

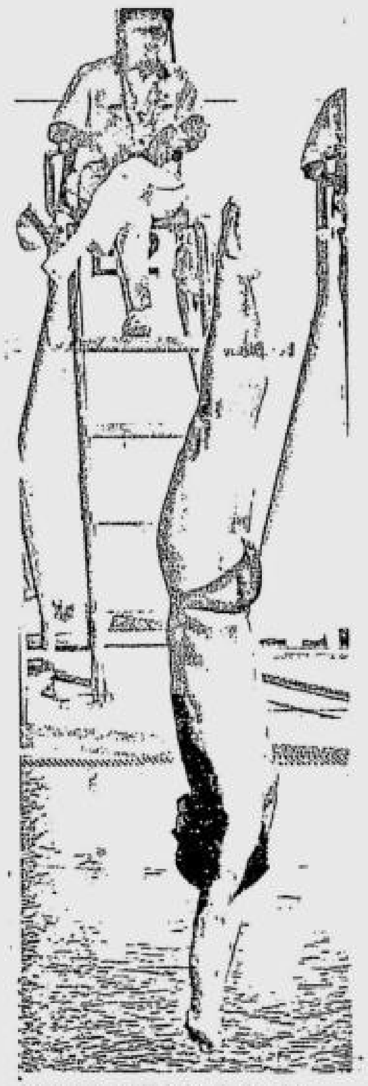
Singson has denied ever using any performance-enhancing drug, traces of which were found in a herbal slimming tea she used in order to make the weight limit.

Atienza finished third behind Thailand's Wassana Winatho and Vietnam's Nguyen Thi Thu Cuc.

Divers snatch gold with late briliance

NAKHON RATCHASHIMA—saving their best for last, Ryan Rexel Fabriga and Jaime Asok came from behind to nip Vietnam and bag the 10-meter synchronized platform gold at the end of the 24th Southeast Asian Games diving competitions here on Saturday.

Down by three points to leaders Nguyen Min and Vu Anh Duy going into the fifth and final round, the Filipino pair snatched the event with a flawless back 2-1/2 somersault and 1-1/2 twist for 78.94 points.



RYAN Rexel Fabriga flashes his form in the 10m platform. RAFFY LERMA

That tally was the best in the last jump and boosted the RP duo to the top with a total of 376.72 points, relegating the Vietnamese to the silver with 365.04.

The Indonesian duo of Mohammad Nasrullah and Zaidi Noor (357.96) got the bronze.

"*Kinabahan ako dahil pareho sila ng routine nung mga Vietnamese* (I got nervous because they had the same routine as the Vietnamese)," said Rommel Kong, a member of the RP coaching staff who also worked as a judge here.

"*Masaya ako dahil nakaisa kami ni Jaime* (I'm happy because we managed to steal the win)," said Fabriga, a 22-year-old from Davao City who won the men's 10m platform silver last Friday.

A swimming scholar at Trace College training center of the national swimming and diving teams, Fabriga managed to retain the gold in the event which he won with Kevin Kromwell Kong in the 2005 Manila Games.

"*Talagang pinagbutihan ko ito at matagal din ang paghihirap kong makabalik* (I really prepared hard for this)," said the 5-foot-2 Asok, the former drug dependent who also hails from Davao City (*See related story on the right*).

Asok also won the event with Fabriga in the 2003 Games.

The Filipino never led in the rounds and, in fact, was in third spot overall after three rounds with 225.78 points, trailing the frontrunning Vietnamese (240.84) and the Indonesians (229.14).

After scoring 72 points in the penultimate round, Fabriga and Asok surged past the Indons and trailed the Vietnamese by 297.78 to 300.78.

Together, with Sheila Mae Perez's 3-meter springboard title, the Filipino divers wound up with two golds, four silvers and one bronze medal. The RP divers had a 4-1-2 card in 2005.

After diving into a nightmare, Asok feels like gold anew

NAKHON RATCHASHIMA—JAIME ASOK could hardly believe he was back on the victory podium. Almost a month ago, he wasn't even sure he would compete in the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

The 5-foot-2 Davao City got hooked on drugs in 2004 and was promptly expelled from the national diving team after testing positive to banned substances.

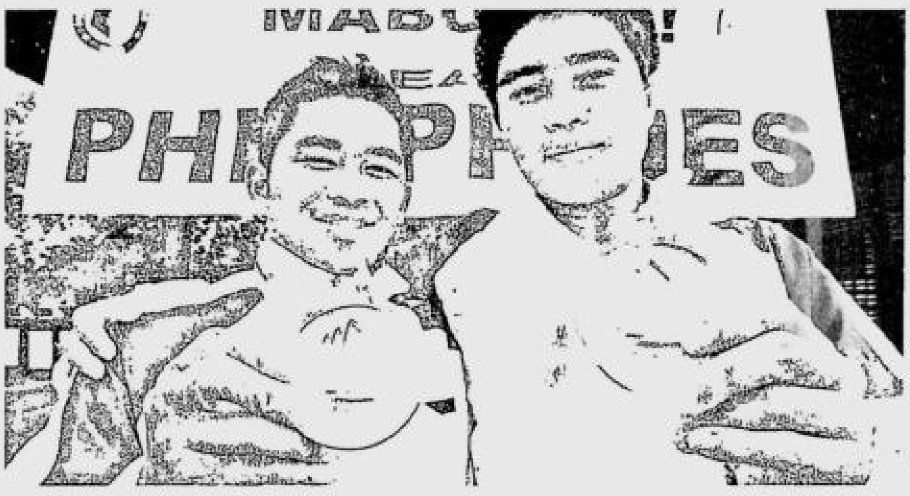
A year earlier, he and teammate Ryan Rexel Fabriga won the men's 10-meter synchronized platform gold in the Vietnam Games.

"*Masyado akong napabarkada* (I fell into bad company)," said the 23-year-old Asok, the youngest among five brothers. "*Paglabas ng* Rizal Memorial (where the divers train) *anduon na iyong mga club at bisyo* (As soon as I stepped out of Rizal Memorial, I go straight to bars and to my vices)."

Ashamed to go back home, he took the advice of his older brother Jesus, a former national softball player, and submitted himself to drug rehabilitation at the New Beginnings Center, which is run by an evangelical Christian group in Parañaque City.

"*Mga* two-and-a-half months *din ako roon* (I spent two and a half months there) in 2004," Asok said. "*Mahirap, ngunit malaki ang pinagbago pagkatapos* (It was difficult, but I changed a lot after my stint there)."

Having sobered up, Asok wanted another shot at representing the country and tried out for the national training pool in 2006. The diving team took him in minus the benefits he once had: Asok was demoted to being a Class C athlete from the elite Class A.



JAIME Asok (left) and Ryan Fabriga together in victory again. RAFFY LERMA

"From P8,000 a month plus other benefits such as food allowance, *naging* P4,000 *na lang ang tinanggap ni* Jaime (he received only P4,000)," Rommel Kong, one of his coaches and one of the judges in the diving events here, said. "*Kailangan niyang mag-umpisa muli* (He needed to start from scratch)."

But what his laurels couldn't do for him, his talent did. Asok eventually worked his way back to his rightful place beside Fabriga, who won the event with Kevin Kromwell Kong as his partner in Manila two years ago.

His perseverance, renewed dedication and discipline paid off.

On Saturday, it was just like old times.

Fabriga and Asok flashed their form, coming from behind to beat the Vietnamese.

And somewhere amid the trickle of medals and the country's spiral down to sixth place, a cosmic scheme of things must have been at work so that it would pan out in such a way that the divers would win for the country its final gold medal.

That way, Asok's story could be told.

"*Ang sa akin lang, sana maging* role model at *inspirasyon ang pagkapanalong ito* (I just hope that people will s[illegible] me as a role model and that my story w[illegible]e as an inspiration for them)," Asok said. "*Na sa tulong ng Diyos may pag-asang magbago* (May they learn that with God's help, change is possible)."

Lopez justifies Games boxing walkout

THE WALKOUT BY THE PHILIPpine boxing squad in the 24th Southeast Asian Games was a worthy act that should unify Filipino officials, athletes and fans, according to Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny T. Lopez.

Lopez yesterday said the team made the move to help reform the Mafia-like system in international amateur boxing and destroy the vestiges of biased judging.

"More than ever, this is the perfect time for all of us to rally behind the move which will trigger much-needed change in the state of amateur boxing," said Lopez.

"The Philippines has been a victim of biased officiating in Thailand for many years and we only seized the moment to make a difference."

Lopez said he believed that the AIBA, under the new leadership of Dr. Wu Ching-kuo, is transparent, sincere and determined to change the two-decade-old system "marred by corruption and malaise."

While stressing that the RP protest move was not an unsportsmanlike act, the Abap head said everyone should look at the bigger picture, which is to push reforms in amateur boxing.

"How can it be an unsportsmanlike act when fair play isn't in the picture (in the SEAG)?" Lopez said. "Are we going to close our eyes to reality and risk permanent physical and mental injuries to our boxers?"

He appealed to his fellow sports officials to stand united against biased officiating.

Mamiit pairings settle for 2 silvers

CECIL Mamiit (right) shows his gold medal in men's singles after overwhelming Thai ace Danai Udomchoke (left), 6-3, 6-0, on Friday. RAFFY LERMA

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—THE THAIS had the last laugh in tennis, but Cecil Mamiit did not go down without a fight.

Sonchai and Sonchat Ratiwatana, twins who have played doubles tennis all their lives, manhandled Mamiit and Eric Taino Saturday in the 24th Southeast Asian Games finals that had the hometown gallery dancing in glee.

The Thais posted a 6-2, 6-4 victory in 65 minutes as Mamiit-Taino lost for the second time to the Thai siblings here—and third overall counting their first meeting in the doubles final of the 2005 Manila Games.

Sonchai returned a few minutes later to power his second-seeded partnership with Napaporn Tongsalee to an exciting 6-4, 7-6 (3) decision of Mamiit and Denise Dy in the mixed doubles finals.

That twin thunder left the Philippines with just one tennis gold medal in these Games.

Thailand actually swept all doubles finals, with the Tongsalee-Tamarine Tanasugarn tandem easily prevailing over the Indonesian pair of Wynne Tedjakusuma and Sandy Gumulya, 6-2, 6-3.

Ratiwatana-Tongsalee encountered tough challenge from the Filipinos, as Mamiit forced the action on several occasions to put the RP pair ahead, 2-1, in the second set.

But the Thai pair slowly regained cohesion, especially in long rallies, to send the set into tiebreak, eventually prevailing after one hour and 21 minutes.

Thailand thus wrested the second of three gold medals from the Philippines, which ruled this event through Taino's partnership with Riza Zalameda in 2005.

Mamiit's lone gold in men's singles saved the RP squad from a shutout at His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary center court here. The Filipinos also won the men's team event in the Manila Games.

Mamiit-Taino, which played together for just the second tournament this year, scored an early break and enjoyed a 2-1 lead in the first. They also served for 3-love in the second.

But both leads didn't stand a chance against the perfectly synchronized twins.

Mamiit was serving for a two-game lead at 30-0 in the first set when the Thais broke back.

The 31-year-old Mamiit, who silenced a bigger gallery with a 6-3, 6-0 destruction of Thai ace Danai Udomchoke in the singles finals on Friday, broke the Thais again in the first game of the second set, scoring on a forehand winner that zipped in between the twins.

But the Thais slowly worked their way back, as Taino double-faulted at 2-all. The match went to serve in the first nine games until Mamiit put two forehand passing shots into the net to yield matchpoint to the Thais.

A Sonchai backhand clipped the net slightly and rolled over, denying Taino a chance to reach it, for the match.

NOTICE TO MANILA WATER CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC
WATER TARIFF FOR THE EAST ZONE

Effective January 1, 2008, Manila Water Company will implement a **29.47%** Rate Rebasing Adjustment as recommended by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System Regulatory Office in its Resolution No. 07-025-CA dated 12 December 2007 as confirmed by the MWSS Board Resolution No.2007-278 dated December 14, 2007.

Manila Water Company, the East Zone concessionaire, serves the following areas:

Manila (San Andres and Sta. Ana only); Quezon City (east of San Juan River, West Avenue, EDSA, Congressional and Mindanao Ave., Districts of Tandang Sora, Pasong Tamo and Matandang Balara), Makati City (east of South Super Highway), Mandaluyong City, San Juan City, Marikina City, Pasig City, Taguig City, Pateros - all in Metro Manila; and Rizal Province.

MANILA WATER COMPANY, INC.
WATER TARIFF FOR THE EAST ZONE
Effective January 1, 2008

Manila Water

1. WATER CHARGE (peso per cubic meter)

	Tariff effective until December 31, 2007					Tariff effective January 1, 2008		
RESIDENTIAL	A. BASIC	B. CERA	C. FCDA -1.47% of Basic	TOTAL	RESIDENTIAL	A. BASIC	B. FCDA (0% of Basic)	TOTAL
First 10 cu.m.	53.42 /Conn.	10.00 /Conn.*	(0.79) /Conn.	62.63 /Conn.	First 10 cu.m.	69.16 /Conn.	- /Conn.	69.16 /Conn.
Next 10 cu.m.	6.52 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.10) /Cu.m.	7.43 /Cu.m.	Next 10 cu.m.	8.44 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	8.44 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	12.36 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.18) /Cu.m.	13.18 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	16.00 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	16.00 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	16.27 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.24)/Cu.m.	17.03 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	21.07 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	21.07 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	19.02 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.28)/Cu.m.	19.74 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	24.62 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	24.62 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	19.91 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.29)/Cu.m.	20.62 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	25.78 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	25.78 /Cu.m.
Next 50 cu.m.	20.80 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.31)/Cu.m.	21.50 /Cu.m.	Next 50 cu.m.	26.93 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	26.93 /Cu.m.
Next 50 cu.m.	21.70 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.32)/Cu.m.	22.38 /Cu.m.	Next 50 cu.m.	28.09 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	28.09 /Cu.m.
Over 200 cu.m.	22.59 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.33)/Cu.m.	23.26 /Cu.m.	Over 200 cu.m.	29.25 /Cu.m.	- Cu.m.	29.25 /Cu.m.
SEMI-BUSINESS					SEMI-BUSINESS			
First 10 cu.m.	89.67 /Conn.	10.00 /Conn.*	(1.32) /Conn.	98.35 /Conn.	First 10 cu.m.	116.09 /Conn	- /Conn.	116.09 /Conn
Next 10 cu.m.	10.92 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.16) /Cu.m.	11.76 /Cu.m.	Next 10 cu.m.	14.13 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	14.13 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	13.46 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.20) /Cu.m.	14.26 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	17.42 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	17.42 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	17.10 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.25) /Cu.m.	17.84 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	22.13 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	22.13 /Cu.m.
Next 20 cu.m.	19.91 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.29) /Cu.m.	20.62 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	25.78 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	25.78 /Cu.m.
Next 20cu.m.	20.80 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.31) /Cu.m.	21.50 /Cu.m.	Next 20 cu.m.	26.93 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	26.93 /Cu.m.
Next 50 cu.m.	21.70 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.32) /Cu.m.	22.38 /Cu.m.	Next 50 cu.m.	28.09 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	28.09 /Cu.m.
Next 50 cu.m.	22.59 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.33) /Cu.m.	23.26 /Cu.m.	Next 50 cu.m.	29.25 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	29.25 /Cu.m.
Over 200 cu.m.	23.55 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.35) /Cu.m.	24.20 /Cu.m.	Over 200 cu.m.	30.49 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	30.49 /Cu.m.
BUSINESS GROUP I					BUSINESS GROUP I			
First 10 cu.m.	242.78 /Conn	10.00 /Conn.*	(3.57) /Conn.	249.21 /Conn.	First 10 cu.m.	314.33 /Conn.	- /Conn	314.33 /Conn
Next 90 cu.m.	24.31 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	24.95 /Cu.m.	Next 90 cu.m.	31.47 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	31.47 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.44 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	25.08 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	31.65 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	31.65 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.51 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	25.15 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	31.74 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	31.74 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.58 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	25.22 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	31.82 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	31.82 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.72 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	25.35 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.00 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.00 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.79 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.36) /Cu.m.	25.42 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.09 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.09 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.85 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.49 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.18 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.18 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	24.99 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.62 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.36 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.36 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	25.06 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.69 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.45 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.45 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	25.13 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.76 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	32.54 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.54 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	25.27 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.90 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	32.71 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.71 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	25.34 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	25.96 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	32.80 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.80 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	25.40 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.37) /Cu.m.	26.03 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	32.89 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	32.89 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	25.54 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.17 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	33.07 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.07 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	25.61 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.23 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	33.16 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.16 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	25.68 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.30 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.25/Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.25 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	25.82 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.44 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.42 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.42 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	25.88 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.50 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.51 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.51 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	25.95 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.57 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.60 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.60 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.09 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.71 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.78 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.78 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.16 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.38) /Cu.m.	26.77 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.87 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.87 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.23 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	26.84 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	33.96 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	33.96 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.37 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	26.98 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.14 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.14 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.43 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.05 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.22 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.22 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.50 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.11 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.31 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.31 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.57 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.18 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.40/Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.40 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.71 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.32 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.58 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.58 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.78 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.38 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.67 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.67 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.85 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.45 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.76 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.76 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	26.98 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.59 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	34.94 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.94 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	27.05 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.65 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	35.02 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.02 /Cu.m.
Over 10000 cu.m.	27.12 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.72 /Cu.m.	Over 10000 cu.m.	35.11 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.11 /Cu.m.
BUSINESS BUSINESS GROUP II					BUSINESS GROUP II			
First 10 cu.m.	262.69 /Conn.	10.00 /Conn.*	(3.86) /Conn.	268.83 /Conn.	First 10 cu.m.	340.11 /Conn.	- /Conn.	340.11 /Conn.
Next 90 cu.m.	26.43 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.05 /Cu.m.	Next 90 cu.m.	34.22 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.22 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	26.57 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.18 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	34.40 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.40 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	26.78 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.39) /Cu.m.	27.38 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	34.67 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.67 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	26.98 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.59 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	34.94 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	34.94 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	27.12 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.72 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	35.11 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.11 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	27.33 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	27.92 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	35.38 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.38 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	27.53 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.40) /Cu.m.	28.13 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	35.65 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.65 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	27.67 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.41) /Cu.m.	28.26 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	35.82 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	35.82 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	27.88 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.41) /Cu.m.	28.47 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	36.09 /Cu.m.	- Cu.m.	36.09 /Cu.m.
Next 100 cu.m.	28.08 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.41) /Cu.m.	28.67 /Cu.m.	Next 100 cu.m.	36.36 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	36.36 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	28.22 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.41) /Cu.m.	28.80 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	36.54 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	36.54 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	28.43 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.42) /Cu.m.	29.01 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	36.80 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	36.80 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	28.56 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.42) /Cu.m.	29.14 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	36.98 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	36.98 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	28.77 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.42) /Cu.m.	29.35 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	37.25 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	37.25 /Cu.m.
Next 200 cu.m.	28.97 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.43) /Cu.m.	29.55 /Cu.m.	Next 200 cu.m.	37.51 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	37.51 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	29.11 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.43) /Cu.m.	29.68 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	37.69 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	37.69 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	29.32 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.43) /Cu.m.	29.89 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	37.96 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	37.96 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	29.52 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.43) /Cu.m.	30.09 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	38.22 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	38.22 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	29.68 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.44) /Cu.m.	30.22 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	38.40 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	38.40 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	29.87 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.44) /Cu.m.	30.43 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	38.67 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	38.67 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.07 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.44) /Cu.m.	30.63 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	38.94 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	38.94 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.21 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.44) /Cu.m.	30.77 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	39.11 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	39.11 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.42 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.45)/Cu.m.	30.97 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	39.38 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	39.38 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.62 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.45) /Cu.m.	31.17 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	39.65 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	39.65 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.76 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.45) /Cu.m.	31.31 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	39.82 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	39.82 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	30.97 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.46) /Cu.m.	31.51 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	40.09 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	40.09 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	31.10 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.46) /Cu.m.	31.65 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	40.27 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	40.27 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	31.31 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.46) /Cu.m.	31.85 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	40.54 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	40.54 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	31.51 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.46) /Cu.m.	32.05 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	40.80 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	40.80 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	31.65 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.47) /Cu.m.	32.19 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	40.98 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	40.98 /Cu.m.
Next 500 cu.m.	31.86 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.47) /Cu.m.	32.39 /Cu.m.	Next 500 cu.m.	41.25 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	41.25 /Cu.m.
Over 10000 cu.m.	32.06 /Cu.m.	1.00 /Cu.m.	(0.47) /Cu.m.	32.59 /Cu.m.	Over 10000 cu.m.	41.51 /Cu.m.	- /Cu.m.	41.51 /Cu.m.

2. A. ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGE (EC)
12% of Water Charge

B. SEWERAGE CHARGE (SC)
40% of the Water Charge for Residential and Semi-Business customers connected to MWCI sewer lines
45% of the Water Charge for Business Group I & II customers connected to MWCI sewer lines

3. MAINTENANCE SERVICE CHARGE (MSC)

Meter Size	Amount (Peso/conn)
1/2" or 13mm	1.50
3/4" or 20mm	2.00
1" or 25mm	3.00

Meter Size	Amount (Peso/conn)
1 1/4" or 40mm	4.00
2" or 50mm	6.00
3" or 75mm	10.00

Meter Size	Amount (Peso/conn)
4" or 100mm	20.00
6" or 150mm	35.00
8" or 200mm	50.00

4. VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT) 12% for the Charges 1, 2 and 3

THE MONTHLY BILL IS THE SUM OF 1, 2, 3 AND 4.

Approved By:

ALBERTO C. AGRA
Officer-in-charge, MWSS RO

LORENZO H. JAMORA
MWSS Administrator

ANTONINO T. AQUINO
MWCI- President

For further inquiries you may visit the nearest Branch Office or call up Manila Water Company Hotline at 1627

Manila Water

WHAT EAST CONCESSION CUSTOMERS SHOULD KNOW

What is Rate Rebasing?

Rate Rebasing is a process done every five years by the MWSS and Manila Water to update the service improvement plan for customers and evaluate the required capital investment.

The year-long thorough review was done by the MWSS, the Regulatory Office and its consultants in a very professional and transparent manner.

How will customers benefit from the Service Improvement Plan?

Consistent with the government's goal to provide efficient water and wastewater services, Manila Water proposed a service improvement plan which is anchored on two components:

- **Reliability** - to ensure 24-hour water supply for Metro Manila and parts of Rizal, mitigate effects of natural calamities and improve the reliability of Angat
- **Expansion** - to deliver water and wastewater services to currently unserved areas and ensure sufficient water supply to cater to the additional 2 million population in parts of Rizal, Taguig and parts of Bulacan in the next five years

Environmental programs such as intensified wastewater services, disaster preparedness and watershed management are also part of Manila Water's service improvement plan.

With these projects, drinking water will be made available 24 hours a day to all customers, including vital service institutions such as schools, hospitals, markets, orphanages and city jails.

Improved overall health and sanitation conditions, especially in poor communities, will also result from Manila Water's more aggressive wastewater services. 100% desludging of septic tanks will be done once in 7 years.

Manila Water will also implement a major wastewater expansion program starting off with the Marikina River basin.

Manila Water will spend a total of P187 billion in the next 15 years to carry out these projects.

What will be the Tariff Adjustment?

Although the overall average all-in rate increase will be P5 per cubic meter, due to the socialized tariff structure, the effect on majority of our customers will be as follows:

Residential customers consuming about 15 cubic meters a month will pay an additional P0.56 per day, or an equivalent increase from P125 to P141 monthly water bill.

Residential customers consuming about 30 cubic meters a month or an average of 1 cubic meter per day will have an increase of P62 per month from P333 to P395, or a P2.08 increase per day.

Majority of our customers are in this bracket.

The tariff increase in 2008 is the first of a series of adjustments in the next five years.

For further inquiries, please call our Customer Care Hotline 1627 or log on to www.manilawater.com

Yap lifts Giants over Express

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Welcoat
6:30 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Magnolia

By June Navarro

JAMES YAP SHOOK OFF THE PRESSURE of playing before his hometown crowd to send Purefoods streaking past Air21, 114-92, in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup On Tour last night at the West Negros College gym in Bacolod City.

Tentative early on in front of his provincemates, the proud son of Escalante, Negros Occidental recovered from a shaky start and fired 20 of his 25 points in the second half as the TJ Giants sped off to a fitting follow-up to their convincing victory over Welcoat.

The Giants notched their 11th win in 14 games, solidifying their grip of the solo lead and inching closer to an automatic semifinal slot in the process. The top two teams after the preliminaries will advance outright to the semis.

Yap opened the third period with seven quick points capped by a three-pointer to ignite the decisive breakaway that transformed a slim 46-41 Purefoods halftime lead to a 23-point bubble entering the final quarter.

For the second straight time, the Express missed the services of Wynne Arboleda, who is out because of sore eyes.

Meanwhile, Coca-Cola (4-8) will flaunt its new-found confidence against Welcoat when action shifts to the Araneta Coliseum today. The Tigers have become one of the hottest teams in the league, losing just once in four games since Asi Taulava arrived via a trade.

On the other hand, the Dragons (3-10) continue to falter without pivotman Jay-R Reyes. Welcoat absorbed a sixth straight setback after losing to Talk 'N Text Friday night.

In the other game, Magnolia will try to break out of a slump of its own when it battles Barangay Ginebra. The Beverage Masters took a nosedive from second place to fourth in the company of the Phone Pals and the Realtors (7-6) after dropping two straight matches.

The scores:

PUREFOODS 114—J. Yap 25, R. Yap 15, Simon 14, Pingris 14, Salvador 14, Raymundo 10, Adducul 6, Yee 6, Sanz 5, Lanete 3, Larong 2, Evangelista 0.

AIR21 92—Santos 20, Se 18, Cruz 14, De Ocampo 12, Canaleta 10, Chia 6, Magsumbol 5, Sotto 4, Kramer 3, Intal 0.

Quarters: 21-24, 46-41, 81-58, 114-92

STA. LUCIA point guard Ryan Reyes drives past Red Bull counterpart Warren Ybañez in their game Friday night. The rookie Reyes had a career-high 26 points as the Realtors creamed the Bulls, 104-78.

PBA IMAGES

Lions Ekwe, Menor join Coffee Kings in quarters

GAMES TUESDAY (*The Arena, San Juan*)
2 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs Mail and More
4 p.m.—San Mig Coffee vs Pharex

By Jasmine W. Payo

FOUR SAN BEDA PLAYERS PLUNGE INTO PBL action mid-season as the quarterfinal round fires off on Tuesday at The Arena in San Juan.

Nigerian Sam Ekwe, Ogie Menor and Pong Escobal will suit up for San Mig Coffee when it shoots for a semifinal slot versus Pharex in the V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup at 4 p.m.

Toyota Balintawak and Mail and More square off in the other quarterfinal pairing at 2 p.m.

Another Lions mainstay, Borgie Hermida, will head to unbeaten Hapee Toothpaste, which clinched an outright semifinal stint along with Harbour Centre.

The 6-foot-8 Ekwe will provide a much-needed boost for the Coffee Kings' frontline, while Menor and Escobal are expected to deliver more offensive spark with top team scorer Bonbon Custodio.

The trio—the backbone of San Beda's back-to-back NCAA championship run—took the slots of Fil-Am Kevin Dalafu, Allen Aguada and Al Magpayo.

It will be the second time for the Lions, who will be reunited with former San Beda coach Koy Banal, to see action in the league after playing for Magnolia in the Silver Cup.

San Mig Coffee and Toyota Balintawak only need to win once to advance to the semifinals after nailing the twice-to-beat quarterfinal incentives.

Hapee ruled with a 9-0 record, while Harbour Centre came second at 7-2.

The league took a two-week break to give way to PBL standouts who suited up for the Harbour-Philippine Team, which recently bagged the championship in the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

Athletes pose for charity's sake

MULTI-AWARDED RACE CAR DRIVER JP Tuason, founding president of Tuason Racing School, has chosen the Mabuhay Deseret Foundation as one of the beneficiaries of the Oakley-Art Chantry "Art Charity Fundraiser."

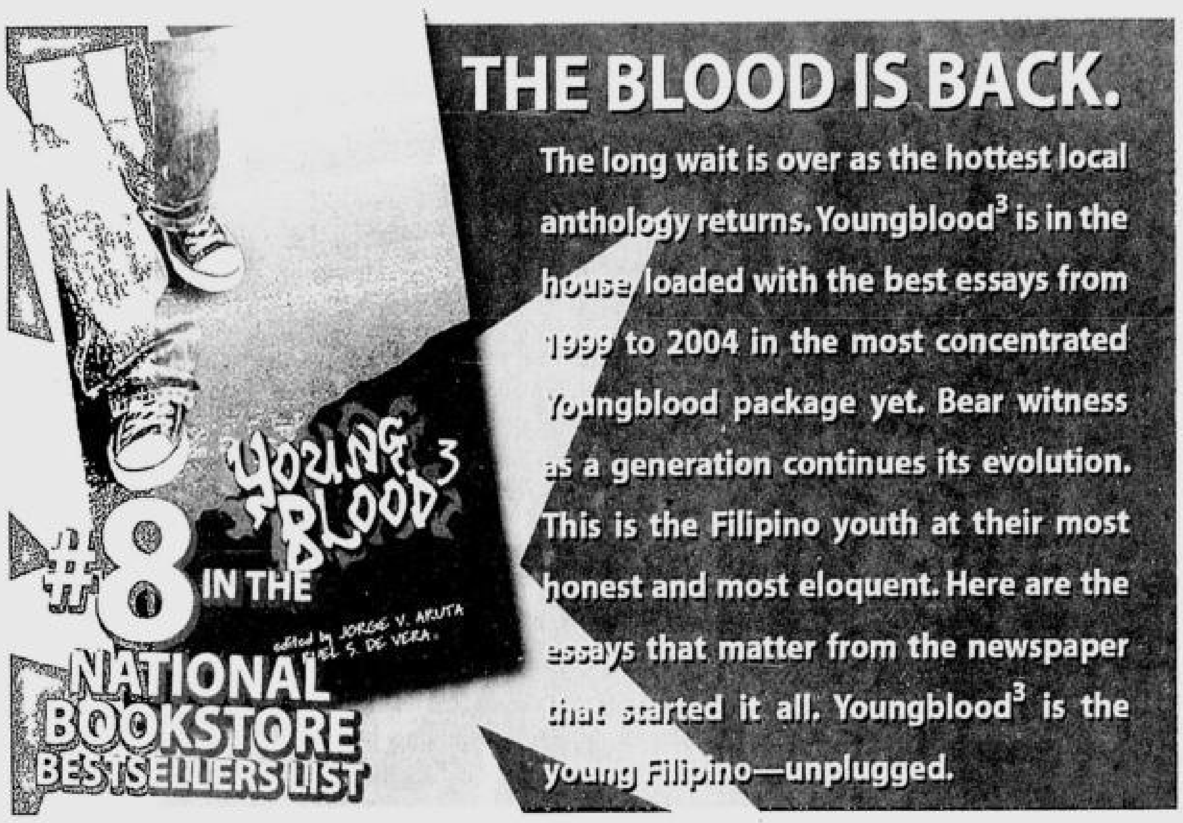
Tuason was one of the country's sports icons who posed for top photographer Raymund Isaac for a fund-raising campaign spearheaded by the number one sports performance eyewear, Oakley and its CEO Ramesh Dargani, to benefit the charity institutions of their choice.

Joining Tuason in this event are champion triathletes Tricia Chiongbian and Fred Uytengsu; sports couples and wakeboard champions Ernie and Jeena Lopez; and Martha and Arthur King whose photos taken by Isaac were auctioned to raise over P180,000 for charity.

Included in roster of charity institutions that will benefit from the proceeds are Bantay Bata, World Vision, Children's Hours, KIDS and Red Cross.

Dargani expressed gratitude to these sports icons and celebrities who gave their share for the success of this cause-worthy event.

JP TUASON in his Raymund Isaac photo.



THE BLOOD IS BACK.

The long wait is over as the hottest local anthology returns. Youngblood^3 is in the house, loaded with the best essays from 1999 to 2004 in the most concentrated Youngblood package yet. Bear witness as a generation continues its evolution. This is the Filipino youth at their most honest and most eloquent. Here are the essays that matter from the newspaper that started it all. Youngblood^3 is the young Filipino—unplugged.

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Romero, Trinidad: Asiad up next

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, THAILAND—Before anything else, allow me to thank the nice people who remembered my birthday last Dec. 14. I could not reply to their well-wishes because the roaming feature in my cell phone expired earlier than I expected.

There was no big celebration in Ratchasima on this special day but I was happy when people raised a toast for me as the clock struck 12 midnight. These were the same people who make up the regular drinking group at the Sabai Hotel grounds which had been transformed into a beer garden by the sporting Pinoys.

The RP men's team, led by coaches Junel Baculi, Louie Alas and assistant team manager Erick Arejola, also sang the birthday song for me at the Bangkok airport in front of all the other PAL passengers.

* * *

RP Harbour Centre's overwhelming victory in the 24th Southeast Asian Games has inspired both basketball patron Mikee Romero and PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad to go one level higher in their aspirations.

"If the SBP and the PBA will allow us, maybe we could get the next Asian Games assignment," said Chino who went all out to support the Mikee Romero-financed national team composed of PBL players.

The Philippine team was so dominating they averaged a 43-point margin of victory against its SEAG opponents.

If it looked like a walk in the park for the national team, RP head coach Junel Baculi said, it was only because early preparation made it appear so.

While everyone is looking forward to another SEAG gold medal in 2007, there is a possibility that the next host may scrap basketball from the list of events.

"This might happen because the next SEAG host, Laos, does not have the facilities for basketball. They do not have a basketball gym," said Chino, who has designated coach Joe Lipa to be a special adviser to the PBL commissioner for international competitions.

"But who knows, they may be able to construct a stadium in two years time," Chino added.

* * *

You must have read somewhere that garments were stolen from both the men's and women's teams at the athletes' village last week.

The missing items were all stolen from the clothesline in the wee hours of the morning while the owners were sleeping.

The garments were freshly washed.

The men lost mostly practice uniforms, and so did the ladies except for Chiko Matsuno, who also lost a pair of bra and panties. The thieves, it seemed, did not want to jeopardize the Filipinos' bid by stealing their official uniforms.

Which is why the victims suspect that it was their *kababayans* who stole the garments.

Athletes from two disciplines left for home on the day the items were lost.

* * *

But here's an interesting development. The day before the ladies were to return to Manila, Chiko reported that her undies were returned by the "thieves".

Chiko said that she found her lost underwear in the trash can.

Incidentally, Chiko and three others from the ladies basketball team had to stay behind in Bangkok for another day. Good thing they were offered overnight quarters by their liaison officer, who was based in the city.

The girls were already checking in at the Bangkok airport after a tiring 4-hour land trip from Ratchasima, when they found out that they were booked for an earlier flight which they had already missed.

* * *

Col. Buddy Andrada of the Philippine Olympic Committee was rushed to the hospital in Ratchasima where he was confined for a few days.

Nobody knows what the doctor's diagnosis and prognosis were, but according to sketchy reports, Andrada had difficulty breathing, possibly caused by a severe attack of asthma.

This is not the first time this happened, said the ladies at the athletes' village.

* * *

It's back to reality, starting tomorrow when the PBA board convenes to listen to the presentation of the three remaining candidates for the PBA commissioner's post, namely, Patrick Gregorio, Lambert Ramos and Chito Salud. They will be given 30 minutes each to elaborate on their plans and program of action, after which the board will deliberate on who will get the post.

Manotoc, Clavecilla spearhead La Salle, Ateneo squads

THE GREEN ARCHERS AND THE BLUE EAGLES bring their rivalry to the fairways when the country's top golfers—seniors and promising upstarts alike—slug it out for the fourth time in the La Salle-Ateneo Match Play 2007 beginning Dec. 19 at the Tagaytay Midlands course.

Tommy Manotoc, who recently topped the Asia-Pacific seniors, leads the crack La Salle squad raring to stretch its win run to three in the Ryder Cup format event.

Back-to-back reigning national seniors champion Iggy Clavecilla will spearhead the talent-laden Ateneo side out to even things up with the Taft-based squad in the three-day tournament.

Skippers from both teams—Ateneo's Teboy Javier and La Salle's Freddie Mendoza—said their teams' respective lineups were culled from the ranks of their students and alumni four days before the event which is tipped to surpass the previous stagings in terms of excitement.

TOMMY Manotoc

IGGY Clavecilla

Ateneo humbled La Salle in the inaugural staging of the event but the Green Archers bounced back the following year at Club John and repeated last year at Sherwood.

Joining Manotoc in Team La Salle are former national amateur champion Francis Gaston, King Stehmeier, JP Reyes, Marco Olives, Justin Limjap, Oliver Gan, Sammy Sy, Chucky Hong, Raffy Garcia, Justine Tambunting, Jenz Tecson, Chris Infante, Chepe Dulay, Ronnie Littaua, Kim Hong, Yayi Escuadro, Bobby Celestino, Bones Floro, Migs Garcia, Augie Palisoc, Miko Yee, Miko Alejandro and Thailand Southeast Asian Games silver medalist Anya Tanpinco.

Tanpinco won one of three golf silver medals in the biennial meet which ends today.

Team Ateneo is fielding in Gab Atienza, Joel Bernaldez, Manoling Chan, Leana Farrales, Tonyt Fernando, Bayani Garcia, John Gobing, Katrina Gonzales, Lovelyn Guioguio, Jeric Hechanova, Mari Hechanova, Marty Ilagan, Bobby Iñigo, Pepot Iñigo, Jovi Neri, Mikey Ozaeta, Don Padilla, Junjun Plana, Marcel Puyat, Lino Refuerto, Mark Rivera, Benjie Sarmiento, Jingy Tuason and Yoyong Velez.

Jimmy General is Ateneo team manager while officials are Andy Dumlao, Hedy See and Bobby Ysip.

The event will kick off with the ceremonial tee-off on Tuesday. The six foursome matches and six four ball matches fire off hostilities the following day.

Another six foursome matches and six four ball matches will be played on Thursday with the deciding 18 singles matches set Friday.

Organizers have promised to institutionalize the event in collaboration with the De La Salle Alumni Association Golf Club and the Ateneo Golf Foundation.

Manila, Cebu nines seal championship showdown

GAMES WEDNESDAY *(Rizal Ballpark)*
9 a.m.—Exhibition Game
1 p.m.—Manila vs Cebu (Game 1)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CEBU AND MANILA WENT DIFFERENT ways but still ended up crossing paths when they booked championship tickets yesterday in the Baseball Philippines Series 2 at the Rizal Memorial Ballpark.

Seldom-used outfielder Tony Olayvar dusted off the cobwebs from his bat to hammer the winning run in the bottom of the 9th inning as Cebu turned back hard-fighting Dumaguete, 8-7, to capture the South title.

Later in the afternoon, Manila went on a scoring splurge in the first two innings en route to a 9-3 rout of Marikina for the North Division pennant.

Never having to use their twice-to-beat advantage, the Sharks and the Dolphins will dispute the championship starting on Wednesday's Game 1 in a best-of-three title series.

Olayvar, who averages .154, squarely hit closer Jeffrey Sinangote's fastball first pitch and sent it rolling deep into the left field to score Emerson Atilano.

Atilano earlier singled, stole second base and reached third on fielder's choice that sent out Saxon Omandac.

MANILA Sharks' Nino Tator (left) tries to tag out Miggy Zuluaga of the Marikina Shoe Makers in this file photo. Manila and Cebu meet in a best-of-three series for the Baseball Philippines Series 2 crown starting Wednesday. INQUIRER PHOTO

It was just one of the many highlights of the game that featured heavy underdogs Unibikers against outright South Division finalist Dolphins.

Cebu threatened to rip the game apart when it feasted on the feeble arms of brothers Meljohn and Jay Aranzanso, breaking out with five runs in the bottom of the first inning. Jay, checking in the ¾ inning of the first, stayed on until Sinangote took over in the fateful 9th frame.

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Club chair Robert John Sobrepeña, sports and games committee head Jimmy Borromeo and tournament chair Thirdy Escaño will lead 144 participants in a Filipino-fiesta theme competition.

Sherwood Hills, which boasts of one of Jack Nicklaus' favorite signature courses, was voted by Golf Digest International (GDI) as the 85th best golf course outside of the United States and tops in Southeast Asia.

A couple of weeks after getting the prestigious GDI certificate from the world's No. 1 golf magazine, the China-based www.golf007.com awarded Sherwood Hills a four-star rating.

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"These distinctions are proofs of our continuous quest to improve our facilities for our members and guests," said Sobrepeña.

The Chairman's Cup, added Sobrepeña, "is our humble way of thanking the people who support us."

FREEPORT
PHILIPPI
RACE TO THE FUTURE
CLARK FREEPORT INTERNATIONAL MARATHON

CLARK MARATHON LAUNCH
Organizers and sponsors of the 2008 Clark Freeport International Marathon hold up a banner announcing the race. Clark Development Corp., in cooperation with ActivAsia, Inc., will hold the marathon on Jan. 13 next year. The major foot race was launched recently at the Clark Freeport by (from left) Noemi Garcia, tourism and cultural affairs manager of CDC; Rudy Biscocho of RACE; Liberato P. Laus, president and CEO of CDC; Manny de Luna, president and CEO of ActivAsia, Inc.; Ernesto Gorospe, VP for business development group of CDC; and Blessilda Gimeno of CDC.

Pacman heads RP bid vs US breeders

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The others are Negros Occidental Rep. Iggy Arroyo, Julio Jalandoni, Jerry Ramos, Bebot Villar, Ferdie Buensalida, Efren Canlas, Butch Pichay, Nonoy Libanan, Rey Briones, Tony Marfori, Jun and Rudy Jingco, Philip Meñes, Jet Fernando, former Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, Ruel Ricafort, Edgar Santos, Patrick Antonio, Rudy Albano, Jimmy Ang, JV Magsaysay, Jun Santiago, Mario Villamor, Bebot Uy and Essie Mallilin, Loca Government Sec. Ronnie Puno, Danny Valero, Rene Medina, Ric de Guzman, Manny and Armand Santos and Nelson Salvanera.

Finest Pinoy poker masters dispute ₱1-M pot Dec. 28

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Before the Manila event, another P1 million pot will also be at stake at the Airport Casino Filipino in Parañaque City on Dec. 22.

A P500,000 pot will likewise be offered in Cebu on Dec. 23 and in Angeles City on Dec. 29. Both events will be held at their respective Casino Filipino branches.

Both tournaments have an entry fee of P500 and buy-in of P5,000.

Manotoc, Clavecilla spearhead La Salle, Ateneo squads

THE GREEN ARCHERS AND THE BLUE EAGLES bring their rivalry to the fairways when the country's top golfers—seniors and promising upstarts alike—slug it out for the fourth time in the La Salle-Ateneo Match Play 2007 beginning Dec. 19 at the Tagaytay Midlands course.

Tommy Manotoc, who recently topped the Asia-Pacific seniors, leads the crack La Salle squad raring to stretch its win run to three in the Ryder Cup format event.

Back-to-back reigning national seniors champion Iggy Clavecilla will spearhead the talent-laden Ateneo side out to even things up with the Taft-based squad in the three-day tournament.

Skippers from both teams—Ateneo's Teboy Javier and La Salle's Freddie Mendoza—said their teams' respective lineups were culled from the ranks of their students and alumni four days before the event which is tipped to surpass the previous stagings in terms of excitement.

TOMMY Manotoc

IGGY Clavecilla

Ateneo humbled La Salle in the inaugural staging of the event but the Green Archers bounced back the following year at Club John and repeated last year at Sherwood.

Joining Manotoc in Team La Salle are former national amateur champion Francis Gaston, King Stehmeier, JP Reyes, Marco Olives, Justin Limjap, Oliver Gan, Sammy Sy, Chucky Hong, Raffy Garcia, Justine Tambunting, Jenz Tecson, Chris Infante, Chepe Dulay, Ronnie Littaua, Kim Hong, Yayi Escuadro, Bobby Celestino, Bones Floro, Migs Garcia, Augie Palisoc, Miko Yee, Miko Alejandro and Thailand Southeast Asian Games silver medalist Anya Tanpinco.

Tanpinco won one of three golf silver medals in the biennial meet which ends today.

Team Ateneo is fielding in Gab Atienza, Joel Bernaldez, Manoling Chan, Leana Farrales, Tonyt Fernando, Bayani Garcia, John Gobing, Katrina Gonzales, Lovelyn Guioguio, Jeric Hechanova, Mari Hechanova, Marty Ilagan, Bobby Iñigo, Pepot Iñigo, Jovi Neri, Mikey Ozaeta, Don Padilla, Junjun Plana, Marcel Puyat, Lino Refuerto, Mark Rivera, Benjie Sarmiento, Jingy Tuason and Yoyong Velez.

Jimmy General is Ateneo team manager while officials are Andy Dumlao, Hedy See and Bobby Ysip.

The event will kick off with the ceremonial tee-off on Tuesday. The six foursome matches and six four ball matches fire off hostilities the following day.

Another six foursome matches and six four ball matches will be played on Thursday with the deciding 18 singles matches set Friday.

Organizers have promised to institutionalize the event in collaboration with the De La Salle Alumni Association Golf Club and the Ateneo Golf Foundation

Manila, Cebu nines seal championship showdown

GAMES WEDNESDAY *(Rizal Ballpark)*
9 a.m.—Exhibition Game
1 p.m.—Manila vs Cebu (Game 1)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CEBU AND MANILA WENT DIFFERENT ways but still ended up crossing paths when they booked championship tickets yesterday in the Baseball Philippines Series 2 at the Rizal Memorial Ballpark.

Seldom-used outfielder Tony Olayvar dusted off the cobwebs from his bat to hammer the winning run in the bottom of the 9th inning as Cebu turned back hard-fighting Dumaguete, 8-7, to capture the South title.

Later in the afternoon, Manila went on a scoring splurge in the first two innings en route to a 9-3 rout of Marikina for the North Division pennant.

Never having to use their twice-to-beat advantage, the Sharks and the Dolphins will dispute the championship starting on Wednesday's Game 1 in a best-of-three title series.

Olayvar, who averages .154, squarely hit closer Jeffrey Sinangote's fastball first pitch and sent it rolling deep into the left field to score Emerson Atilano.

Atilano earlier singled, stole second base and reached third on fielder's choice that sent out Saxon Omandac.

MANILA Sharks' Nino Tator (left) tries to tag out Miggy Zuluaga of the Marikina Shoe Makers in this file photo. Manila and Cebu meet in a best-of-three series for the Baseball Philippines Series 2 crown starting Wednesday. INQUIRER PHOTO

It was just one of the many highlights of the game that featured heavy underdogs Unibikers against outright South Division finalist Dolphins.

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Sunday SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/sports

Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Celtics home roll continues; Warriors score

BOSTON—THE BOSTON CELTICS REGISTERED a 12th straight home victory with a 104-82 thrashing of the Milwaukee Bucks on Friday, with Paul Pierce leading the way with a game-high 32 points.

Rajon Rondo added 17 and Kevin Garnett 15 as the Celtics (19-2) matched a franchise record with their 12-0 home start.

"I wanted to be more aggressive than I have been, especially with Ray Allen out, just to pick up more slack," Pierce told reporters after hitting five three-pointers and going nine of 22 from the field.

"But regardless of what the offense does, we are going to turn games around because of our defense," Pierce added. "I thought we made a great defensive run in the third quarter.

That's what opened up the game.

Allen missed the game with a sore ankle but the Celtics did not need him as they scored 12 consecutive points in the third period to move 60-49 ahead before a 10-0 spurt later in the quarter gave them a 31-point advantage.

They finished the period with a 78-59 lead, outscoring the Bucks 32-15 for the quarter on their way to an eighth straight victory overall.

In Oakland, California, Baron Davis put his usual game-breaking flair on the decisive three-pointer with 16.8 seconds to play, and the Golden State Warriors roared from behind in the final minutes to pip the Los Angeles Lakers, 108-106.

Davis had eight of his 22 points and a remarkable assist in the final 3:19 for the Warriors, who fed off of a playoff-worthy sellout crowd of fans in yellow T-shirts to beat Los Angeles for just the second time in 16 meetings.

Kobe Bryant had 21 points for the Lakers.

In Chicago, Luol Deng scored 29 points, Kirk Hinrich delivered the second triple-double of his career, and the Bulls handed New York its fifth straight loss, 101-96.

The Bulls' 16-point, fourth-quarter lead shrank to 3 in the final minute. But Hinrich hit four free throws in the final 23 seconds and Ben Gordon added two more to help seal the win.

Hinrich finished with 15 points, 14 assists and 12 rebounds. His only other triple-double was against Golden State on Feb. 28, 2004.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Vince Carter matched a season high with 32 points, Richard Jefferson had 24, and the New Jersey Nets' snapped a four-game losing streak with a 105-97 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

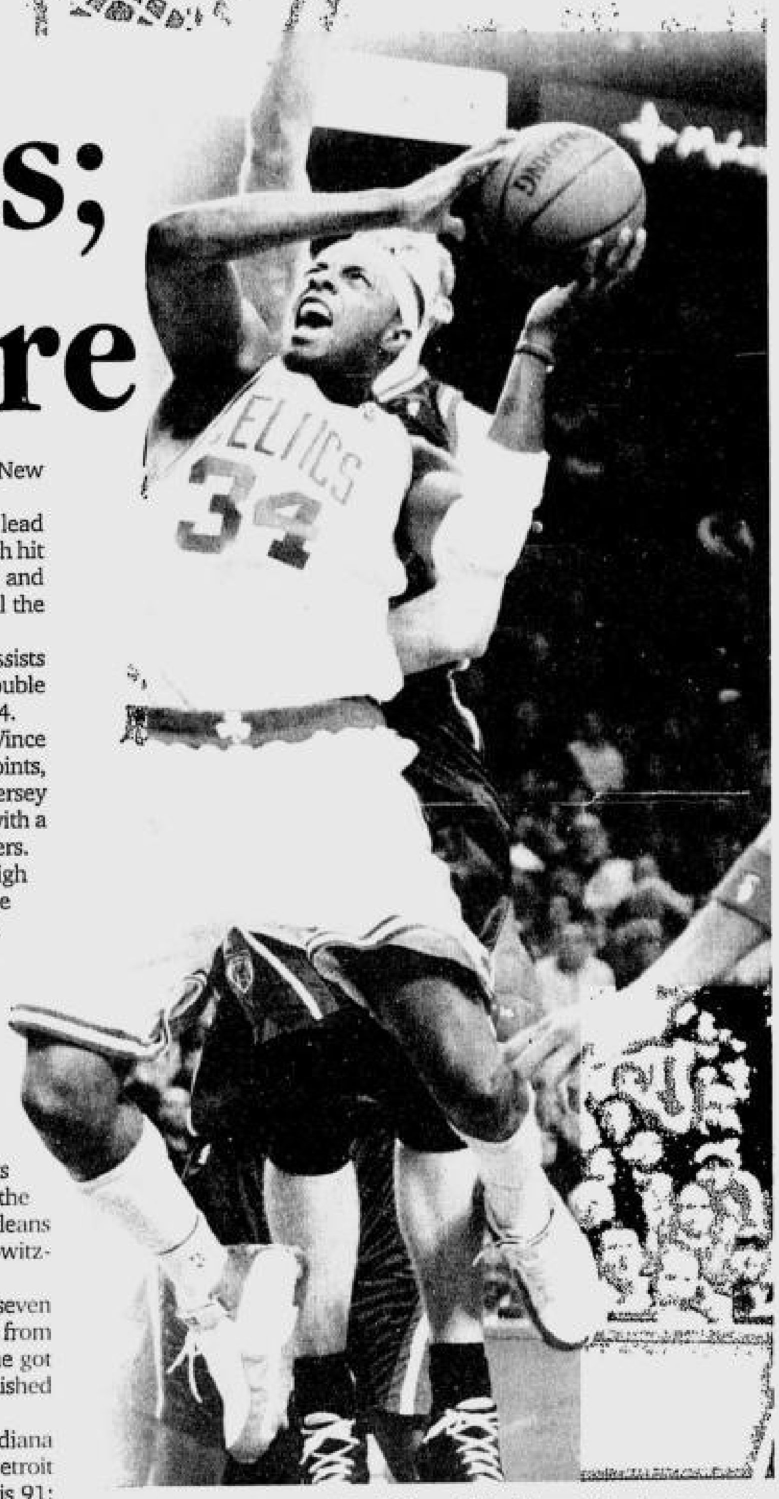
Reserve Josh Boone added a season-high 15, even though he was 2-for-4 from the line when the Cavs intentionally fouled him on consecutive possessions in the fourth quarter. Boone, who threw up an airball from the line earlier, was 3-of-8 there overall.

LeBron James had 29 points, eight assists and six rebounds for Cleveland, which has lost seven of eight, five without James.

In Dallas, Jason Terry scored 25 points and Jerry Stackhouse added 16, and the Mavericks beat cold-shooting New Orleans even with another off night from Dirk Nowitzki, 89-80.

The reigning league MVP had only seven points on 2-of-8 shooting, and is 8-of-23 from the floor over the last two games. But he got some help from Josh Howard, who finished with 15.

In other games, it was Toronto 104, Indiana 93; Sacramento 109, Philadelphia 99; Detroit 91, Atlanta 81; LA Clippers 98, Memphis 91; Seattle 99, Minnesota 88; Orlando 103, Charlotte 87; and Portland 99, Utah 91. *AFP, AP*



BOSTON Celtics forward Paul Pierce (34) drives to the basket past Milwaukee Bucks center Jake Voskuhl. AP

Baseball's dope mess angers Bush, fans

NEW YORK—FROM THE US PRESIDENT TO the average fan, Americans reacted with anger, shock and disappointment on Friday to a report that found some of Major League Baseball's best players used performance-enhancing drugs.

The 20-month independent investigation led by former US Sen. George Mitchell portrayed a pervasive drug culture in the sport and cited more than 80 current and former players, including 10 Most Valuable Player winners and 31 All Stars.

President George W. Bush, a former part owner of the Texas Rangers baseball team, said the use of steroids in baseball had "sullied" the game.

MITCHELL AP

"My hope is that this report is a part of putting the steroid era of baseball behind us," Bush said.

The report was front-page news in US newspapers and the subject of editorials and numerous sports columns.

"We were robbed of an entire era of baseball," wrote Chicago Tribune columnist Rick Morrissey. "It matters not that it was done at syringe-point instead of gunpoint. We wuz robbed."

Mitchell said steroids use dated back to the 1980s, intensifying about 10 years ago with the home run binges of Mark McGwire and Barry Bonds. Fans surveyed in a New York City park expressed disappointment.

Actor Lucas Beck, 25, said the report confirmed the worst.

"You hear about one person or another person. And then it's like, whole baseball teams. Is nothing sacred?"

Visiting Californian Janice Callister doubted it would affect fan interest.

"Cynical side of me said: bottom line, nobody cares," Callister said. "They're going to go see baseball. They want to see home runs."

Roger Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young winner as best pitcher in his league, was the biggest name added to a Hall of Shame list of high-profile players linked to steroids—although the 354-game winner vehemently denied allegations in the report.

The Daily News front page read "Cheaters" and ran a picture of Clemens and former New York Yankee teammate Andy Pettitte, who was also named in the report. The New York Post declared "Disgrace." *Reuters*

HUNGARY'S Laszlo Cseh swims his way to a new record. AFP

Cseh breaks world record

DEBRECEN, HUNGARY—LASZLO CSEH broke his own world record Friday in the men's 400-meter individual medley event.

The Hungarian finished in three minutes, 59.33 seconds at the European Short Course Swimming Championships.

Cseh set his previous record of 4:00.37 in 2005 in Italy. He is the first swimmer to breach the four-minute mark in his event.

"I was nervous because I wasn't able to qualify for this final last year," Cseh said.

The Netherlands also set a world record in the women's 4x50 freestyle relay, with its team of Inge Dekker, Hinkelien Schreuder, Ranomi Kromowidjojo and Marleen Veldhuis finishing in 1:34.82 seconds.

The Netherlands also held the previous record of 1:36.27, set by Schreuder, Dekker, Veldhuis and Chantal Groot on Dec. 9, 2005, in Trieste, Italy. *AP*

Capello named new England manager

LONDON—ONE OF SOCCER'S MOST successful managers, Fabio Capello now has probably the toughest job in the game.

The Italian, who won 14 trophies with four different clubs, was appointed manager of England's ailing national team on Friday by the Football Association.

Capello replaces Steve McClaren, who was fired last month after England failed to qualify for the 2008 European Championship. McClaren was the latest of a long list of failures who have been unable to add to England's World Cup triumph in 1966.

The FA said Capello signed a 4 1/2-year contract through the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2012 championships and would begin work on Jan. 7. His contract is worth a reported 6 million pounds ($12.2 million) a year.

"When we set out to recruit the new manager, we said we were committed to appointing a world-class candidate," FA chief executive Brian Barwick said. "In Fabio Capello we have that man."

Capello will have to get the best out of Wayne Rooney, Michael Owen, Steven Gerrard and, of course, his former Real Madrid star, David Beckham, the player he dropped and then reinstated. *AP*

Woods sets course record, leaves Target field gasping

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA—Tiger Woods continued to show midseason form at the end of the year with a 10-under 62 on Friday, setting the course record at Sherwood Country Club and building a four-shot lead over Jim Furyk in the Target World Challenge.

Playing for the first time in 10 weeks, Woods looked sharp as ever. He stretched his lead with a couple of long putts, one of them for eagle on the par-5 11th, and finished his record round with a 9-iron into 6 feet on the final hole that brought the fans to their feet.

"I hit the ball just a little better than I did yesterday but I made a lot more putts," the 31-year-old told reporters after holing an eight-foot birdie putt at the last.

"He's not a very friendly host to shoot 10 under," said Henrik Stenson, who played with Woods and was 10 shots worse.

Woods was at 13-under 131 as he tries to win his tournament for the fourth time. The previous record of 63 was held by three players, most recently Michael Campbell in 2005.

Furyk, coming off a seven-week break, birdied the last two holes for a 67 and will be paired with his Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup partner in the third round Saturday.

US Masters champion Zach Johnson birdied the last three holes for a 67 and was another shot behind.

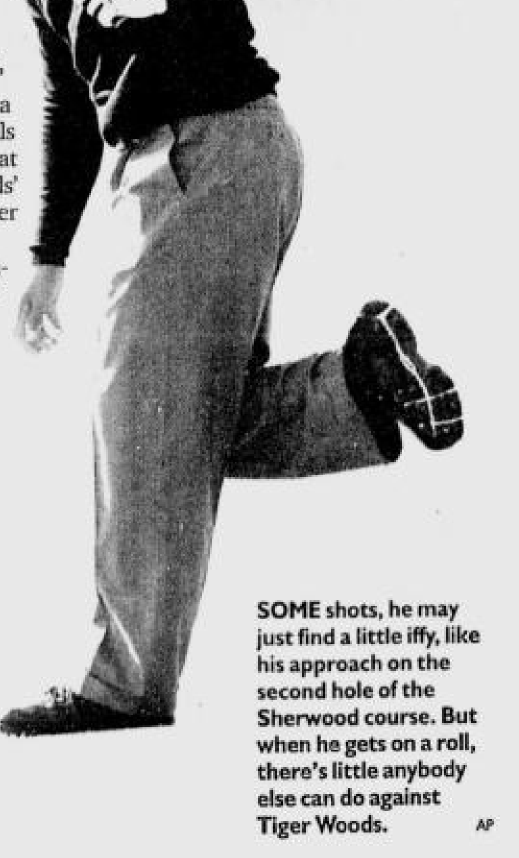
"He never surprises me," Johnson said after posting an eight-under total of 136.

Never mind that the Target World Challenge is a boondoggle for the 16-man field, with a $5.75 million purse that is larger than some US PGA Tour events. Woods treated this like he might even get some FedEx Cup points.

"I still expect a lot from myself on each and every shot," he said. "Whether it's this event or all the way up to a major championship, it's still the game. I want to get a 'W.'"

Scores were generally low on a calm, mild afternoon in the foothills just east of the Pacific Ocean. What made Furyk take notice of Woods' round was that it was five shots better than anyone else.

"Hell of a host," Furyk said, grinning. *AP, Reuters, AFP*



SOME shots, he may just find a little iffy, like his approach on the second hole of the Sherwood course. But when he gets on a roll, there's little anybody else can do against Tiger Woods. AP

Indelible Ink leads 'Juvenile' cast

COMING OFF NINE CONSECUTIVE RUNAWAY VICtories since July, including a sweep of all major two-year-old stakes races, Indelible Ink tries to stamp her class as the year's undisputed freshman campaigner today in the 2007 Philracom Juvenile Championship at the Santa Ana Park.

With P3 million in prizes up for grabs, the 1,500-meter championship could be a preview of the next year's Triple Crown Series.

Indelible Ink will be facing some of the best gallopers in her division, including standout colt Don Enrico and stakes-winning Speed Almighty.

Bred and owned by Herminio "Hermie" Esguerra at the Herma Farms & Stud in Lipa, Batangas, Indelible Ink is an "island born" chestnut filly by Best of Luck out of the mare Seaquin.

She lost her maiden start via disqualification last May under jockey Louie Balboa and only needed two additional run-up starts before she regained her winning form with jockey Patricio Dilema on the saddle.

Dilema piloted her to three easy wins before comebacking rider Jeffril Zarate took over since September.

Indelible Ink's partnership with Zarate produced outstanding results starting off with a track record-setting performance over 1,300 meters last Sept. 16 at the SLLP where she completed the distance in new track record of 1:20 flat.

Five stakes victories followed in succession, including a sweep of the major Juvenile stakes races between the two race venues.

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Sunday BIZ

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Text us your feedback: inquirer biz name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

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Triple S head finds love the second time around

Cora de la Paz weds high school classmate

SSS PRESIDENT and CEO Corazon de la Paz-Bernardo (left) shares a love of golf with friend Joe de Leon (right) and husband Enrique, whom she married on Oct. 7 this year.

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CONTRARY TO POPULAR belief, lighting does strike the same place twice. So does love.

At least that is true for Social Security System president Corazon S. de la Paz who found love again in her high school classmate, Enrique V. Bernardo.

They got married on Oct. 7 this year, 12 years after de la Paz lost her beloved husband—Wenceslao de la Paz, who served as Office of Energy Affairs executive director—to a lingering illness in 1995.

"When Ike asked me to marry him, I decided it was the right time to marry because I saw that he is a good man, in every sense of the word, and we complement each other in many ways," she says, "He promised to take care of me even in our old age and he makes me happy. He has a healthy sense of humor."

To think that they barely talked to each other when they were in Rizal High School back in the mid-1950s.

"I was too young at 14 to be involved with anybody. We were also competing for honors. He's from Pasig and I am from the competing town of Pateros. I was also an ugly duckling while he was one of the better looking guys in our class," De la Paz says.

De la Paz won the race for honors as she graduated salutatorian of the Rizal High School Class of 1956 while Bernardo finished behind her as first honorable mention.

Then they went their separate ways.

Bernardo charted a long career in the banking profession after getting a Business Administration degree from the University of the Philippines.

He worked in different capacities for Philippine Air Lines, San Miguel Corp. and Bancom Development Corp. before spending 30 years in Hong Kong and Indonesia until his retirement in 2002.

He is a widower of Angelina R. Pineda-Bernardo with whom he has two sons—Enrique Jonathan, who is vice president of Washington Mutual in Chicago, and Jon Everard who's with the information technology department of Globe Telecom.

Like Bernardo, De la Paz became a Certified Public Accountant and worked her way up the corporate ladder to become the longtime chair of Joaquin Cunanan and Co., the local representative of Price Waterhouse and eventually president and CEO of SSS.

She was married to De la Paz, former chair of the National Power Corp. and head of the defunct Office of Energy Affairs, for all of 25 years. They have a daughter, Cristy, who's now 28.

The 66-year-old De la Paz says her first husband, Pat, passed away just four days after they celebrated their silver wedding anniversary.

Pat and Cora were such partners, friends and spouses that many thought that De la Paz would not find anyone else to fill the void.

But as fate would have it, De la Paz would find her second chance at love during a class reunion in 2006 when De la Paz and Bernardo finally struck a friendship.

"We then started playing golf together with our high school friends until his wife got ill and passed away. We resumed playing golf a couple of months after his wife died," she says.

It was not long after that when Bernardo popped the question to which De la Paz gladly said, "yes."

But because her first husband would always have a special place in her heart, De la Paz says that she will keep Pat's name and add the Bernardo.

So she introduces herself now as Corazon de la Paz-Bernardo and she says she is lucky because she found two very good men with a good mind and a good heart.

"This relationship is not so different from the last. With my two husbands, I have found two men who allow me to grow and be productive. They are very independent persons with very strong moral and spiritual foundation," she says.

"Ike, like Pat, is not demanding of my time and has very simple needs. He believes in enjoying, keeping and saving this marriage. He always thinks of our family and other people," she says.

> 'I was an ugly duckling; he was one of the better looking guys'

This is why she believes that being married again will not affect her formidable task of keeping the SSS financially healthy and protect the thousands of members across the Philippines.

"He (Ike) does not meddle with my work. In fact, he wants me to continue what I'm doing and understands my commitments and obligations. Most importantly, he believes in what I do and what I can contribute to the development of the SSS," she says.

She also does not see any significant change in her routine.

TRIPLE S/ B2

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Students stand up for the environment

By Amy R. Remo

(FROM left) RAMON Guinto, Clarisse Quimio, Jan Dacumos and Francis Villar

LEVERKUSEN, GERMANY—It started as mere school projects.

But if implemented on a larger scale, these ideas may soon play a crucial role to combat the adverse effects of climate change, as 50 young students had found out during a recent trip here.

Coming from 17 countries, these environmental envoys trooped to the headquarters of healthcare, nutrition and high-tech materials giant Bayer AG in Leverkusen, armed with their researches and experiments on how to protect Mother Earth.

Bayer had sent these students under the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy program, to gain first-hand experience of the principles and practice of modern environmental protection in Germany.

Participants are likewise given the opportunity to study Bayer production plants, learn of environmentally sustainable production and discuss related matters with Bayer experts.

In short, the BYEE program builds a network of youth ambassadors for the environment.

According to Wolfgang Plischke, Bayer board member responsible for innovation, technology and environment, Bayer has always been committed to environment protection and sustainable development for many years.

"Young people have always played a key role ... they will have to make the big decisions tomorrow so it is more important to involve them today in caring responsibly for our planet," Plischke said.

Out of some 7,000 students who have applied for a slot on the program, only 350 had been invited to visit Germany since the BYEE was first implemented in 1998 as a local project of Bayer in Thailand.

Students were selected on the merit of their projects, ranging from organizing school-wide projects on waste segregation to something as complex as developing a bacteria strain to reduce toxicity in water.

Since then, the program has expanded to include 17 countries namely Brazil, China, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Peru, Poland, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela and Vietnam.

This year, Bayer sent four students for the BYEE Philippine delegation, namely Clarissa A. Quimio, a senior biology student from the University of the Philippines-Los Baños; Jan P. Dacumos, a senior environmental science student from Nueva Viscaya State University; Francis Richard D. Villar, a senior nursing student from the University of Northeastern Philippines; and Ramon Lorenzo Luis Guinto, á sophomore medicine student from University of the Philippines-Manila.

Sulfate-reducing bacterium

In her research, Clarisse A. Quimio developed a sulfate-reducing bacterium that will bioremediate toxic chemicals such as chromium from Bulacan leather tannery wastewaters.

Quimio explained that with constant exposure in high concentrations, the chromium waste could potentially cause health problems like skin dermatiris, cancer and genetic mutations.

At the National Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology in her school, Quimio isolated naturally occuring bacterial strains—specifically of the sulfate-reducing bacteria group—that could transform the toxic chromium into its less toxic form.

"I've decided to do this project not only because it's interesting and innovative, but can also be significant to the environment as well as the leather export industry," she said.

Quimio noted that some Philippine leather products have difficulties penetrating the European market because the local tanneries' wastewater management systems do not pass Europe's strict chromium limit standards.

Quimio said that her research is still in its experimental stages, but she hoped to implement these in the tanneries by next year.

"With the BYEE program, I'm more compelled to support projects that incorporate environmental concerns. I hope the information reach communities that need it most," she noted.

Biofertilizer in a tablet

To help local farmers increase yields, Jan P. Dacumos developed a low-cost, enhanced biofertilizer in tablet form, by combining two technologies-vermicomposting and mycelial growth of a mycorrhizal fungus cultured in the laboratory.

Dacumos explained that the tablets are more convenient to store and apply, more appealing to farmers and gardeners, cost-efficient and environment friendly.

This will also allow farmers to lessen the use of synthetic fertilizers which cause agrochemical pollution and pose harm to biodiversity.

> Young people have always played a key role...

Dacumos had already implemented the first phase of his project, which was the development of the biofertilizer tablets and its initial application to forestry seedlings, specifically jatropha curcas intended for the NVSU Biodiesel Farm.

"I am now working on its second phase, which is product testing in tissue-cultured plants like citrus, banana and jatropha," he added.

Dacumos explained that after testing, he hopes to mass produce the tablets and make these available in the market.

"The BYEE program gave me all the encouragement to pursue the implementation of the project despite hectic schedules and funding difficulties," he said.

Dacumos added that the BYEE "gave me opportunities of seeing actual environmental settings in Germany, giving me more information as to how people could act in favor of the environment conservation."

Proper waste disposal

Francis Richard D. Villar's project was a simple but creative way to encourage students to dispose waste properly.

Dubbed as "Slam Dirt," the project had integrated basketball with recyclable waste management by putting in hoops in a trash bin, made of recyclable wastes, scrap or salvage materials.

According to Villar, he hopes to seek consciousness in every student that "dunking" garbages in appropriate bins is not only healthy and environment-friendly, but can also be enjoyable. Villar started implementing the project since September this year.

"What matters to me now is the project's sustainability. I plan to implement it as long as possible and for as long as it will serve its purpose of collecting both recyclable and nonrecyclable wastes," he added.

Glowing with inspiration from the BYEE experience, Villar said he was able to build up the confidence needed to implement even simple projects such as the Slam Dirt.

"For me, the project will serve as an advocacy for a greener ecozone, where my fellow students could play a significant role to step up initiatives and develop ideas and methods for environmentally sustainable projects," he added.

One clean initiative

To mark his school's 100th anniversary, Ramon Lorenzo Luis R.Guinto has set up a project entitled "One Century, One Clean University Initiative," aimed at motivating students at the University of the Philippines to be concerned and take care of the environment.

OC2, he explained, is 100-percent student-organized project promoting three environmental As—awareness, appreciation and action.

The OC2 is also an avenue for students to participate proactively and relevantly in the UP centennial celebrations.

Since June, the OC2 coalition in UP Manila, which is currently participated in by 18 organizations and student councils, had organized a series forums, contests and educational campaigns to stir awareness on environmental consciousness.

"Until now, we are still planning for more activities until December 2008 such as cleanliness drives, garbage market and a national planting project of 100,000 trees, signifying UP's 100 years of excellence," he added.

According to Guinto, the BYEE program provided him to learn first-hand the technologies used by developed countries such as Germany in ensuring environmental sustainability.

"More importantly, the program made me realize that achieving a balance between ecology and economy is not impossible. With strong desire and discipline, that balance is very reachable," he said.

After the week-long trip, Bayer said it hopes that after the trip, the young envoys will "help raise awareness on sustainable development in their local communities by passing on the experiences and insights they have gained during the trip."

AT LEVERKUSEN'S incinerator plant

WENCESLAO de la Paz

Triple S head finds...

From page B1

"Ike is not the meddling type. He has not changed anything in my schedule. I can still do the things I used to do before. Like I said, he does things independently. He gives good advice when I need to address certain issues. I enjoy being looked after and we complement each other, thus making this relationship a very enjoyable one," she says.

Her daughter, Cristy, couldn't be happier for her mother.

"Cristy realizes that I need someone to be with especially now that she's abroad. She approves of the marriage and has more peace of mind knowing that someone is taking good care of me. She knows that I am no longer alone most of the time and that I have someone to be with at home. I also have someone to look to the future with and care for," she says.

The future looks bright, indeed, for the lovestruck Bernardos.

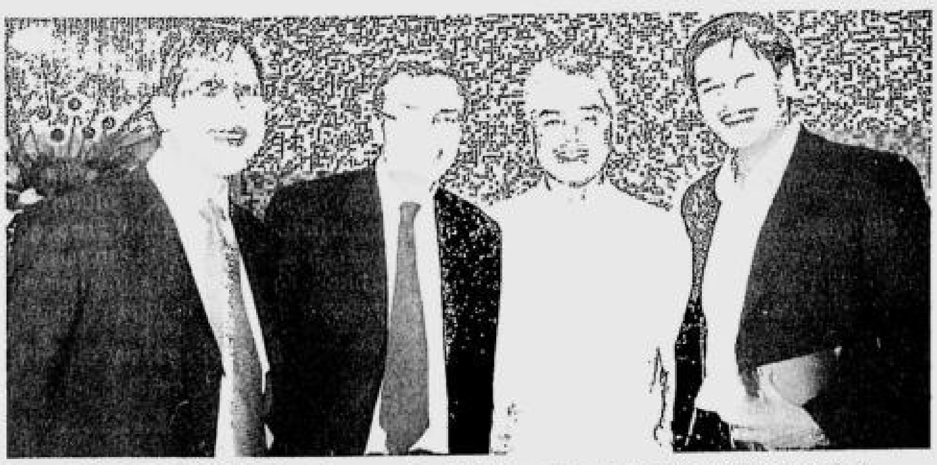
Call center makes offices accessible

EDSA CENTRAL UNDERSCORES ITS POSITION as one of the top IT locations in the metro as it welcomed the expansion of Teleperformance Philippines.

Part of Teleperformance USA, the global leader in contact center outsourcing, the Philippine operations recently inaugurated its new home at the Edsa Central Greenfield District attended by top executives from its parent company as well as key government officials.

Teleperformance Philippines executives, managing director David Rizzo and president Miguel Cojuangco led in welcoming guests, which included Daniel Julien, chair of the Supervisory Board of Teleperformance SA; Brent Welch, chief executive officer of Teleperformance SA; Dominic Dato, chief executive officer of the Teleperformance USA Group; and Kelly Dworak, president of Worldwide Service Delivery. Also joining the festivities were Greenfield Development Corporation's chair Jeffrey Campos, vice chair John Tan and executive vice president Duane Santos, and Department of Trade and Industry assistant secretary for the management support and services group Maria Lourdes Bauer.

Guest of honor Sen. Mar Roxas III congratulated Teleperformance Philippines, citing that the expansion reflects the company's continued trust in the Philippine market. "Given that 10 percent or 7,500 out of 75,000 Teleperformance employees are Filipinos, this shows the huge vote of confidence Teleperformance has given the Philippines," stated Roxas.



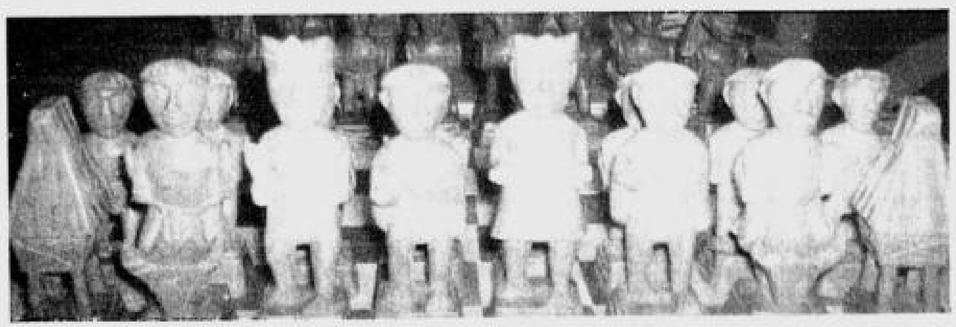
(From left) GDC CHAIR Jeffrey Campos; Daniel Julien, chair of the Supervisory Board of Teleperformance SA; Arturo Diago Jr.; and GDC executive vice president Duane Santos

Teleperformance Philippines has seen tremendous growth in operations since it was established in 1996. Currently, it has 5,000 workstations combined in four facilities including the newly opened Edsa Central office. The 15,000-square meter, two-story building was built in response to the increasing demand of Teleperformance clients, which include telecommunication companies and financial institutions. The office accommodates 2,500 seats for various accounts.

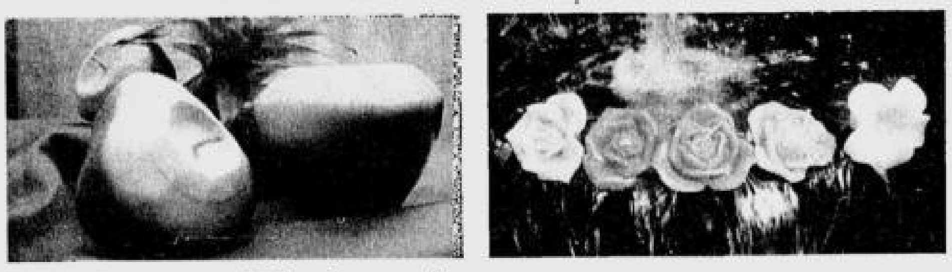
Knowing that their human resources are an integral part of their business, Teleperformance also made sure that their new home in Edsa Central remains a comfortable working environment. Edsa Central is extremely accessible being a hub for various kinds of transportation. The MRT station is a short walk away, as are the terminals for buses, jeepneys, FX, taxis and even tricycles destined for different parts of the metro.

Within the huge Teleperformance facility, various amenities are in place for the enjoyment, comfort and convenience of its employees. The Edsa Central office features an arcade with Timezone games, billiards and videoke, and a gym, helpful stress relievers for the workers. Good food at reasonable prices is available at the onsite canteen, though the building is also surrounded by several food establishments at Edsa Central Pavilion and Edsa Central Market Place.

The office houses separate spacious sleeping quarters for male and female employees, extremely beneficial as most employees are on night shift. The Teleperformance management also holds regular monthly meetings with Greenfield Development Corporation and the local police to discuss various security concerns and measures for the area.



IFUGAO craftsmen get vital product exposure through trade fairs



CANDLES are a perennial favorite among buyers

CREATIVITY unleashed through woodwork

Give gifts made by makers who matter

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WHAT SHOULD I GIVE friends and family this Christmas?

This is the question on everyone's lips with just a few days left before Christmas and still a lot of buying to be done.

Gifts and Graces Fair Trade Foundation offers an answer: Buy gifts that will bring cheer to more than just the recipient, like those produced by nongovernment organizations and foundations that it has taken under its wing.

In this way, buyers get not only a quality product but also the fulfillment in knowing that they helped these NGOs and foundations pursue their mandate to help people in need.

Talk about getting value for money.

Among the products sold by Gifts and Graces are doilies, glass gloves, Christmas ornaments, tray covers, cosmetic kits, tissue holders, recycled bags and pouches produced by Alay Kapwa Kristiyanong Komunidad.

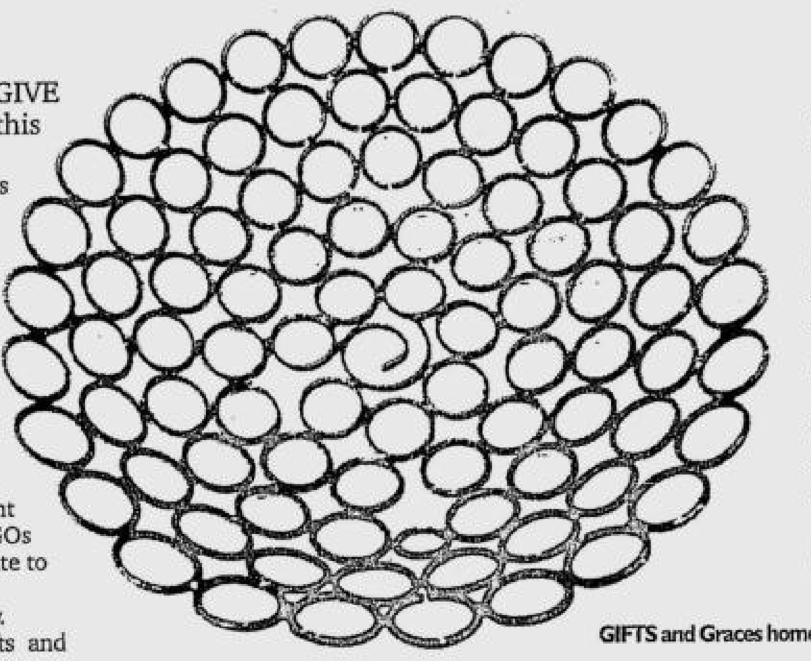
The NGO based in Malate, Manila, was set up to help the urban poor in Leveriza and Paco in Manila, General Trias and Paliparan in Cavite and Cebu and product sales help the women in these areas earn enough money to meet their basic needs.

There are also assorted candles from Pangarap Foundation, which trains street children to make decorative candles, fashion jewelry and bracelet rosaries as part of their recovery at the center.

Through their work, the boys enhance their skills, develop self-confidence and learn the value of honest work. They get a portion of the sales and the rest helps sustain the extensive operations of the foundation.

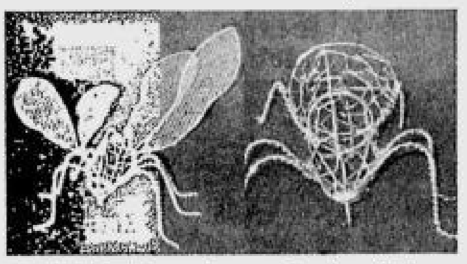
Also popular are the bag and mobile phone charms, book marks, ID holders and other beaded items painstakingly executed by the children and adults with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and other developmental and behavioral problems taken care of by The Learning Center.

The students learn to string beads together and make functional items as part of their therapy. With more sales, TLC hopes to expand its activity center and enable the students to learn more skills.

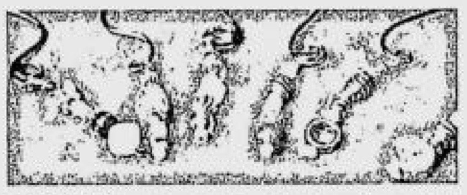


GIFTS and Graces homeware easily find buyers

From an initial group of 10 NGOs, Gifts and Graces is now helping 15 groups



COMMUNITIES use wire to produce beautiful items



CHARMS done by students of the learning center

JOURNAL for the busy executive

The boxes, binders and notebooks made by the urban poor in Quezon City helped by the Kaakbay Entreworker Cooperative likewise sell well at Gifts and Graces kiosk at the Glorietta mall in Makati City.

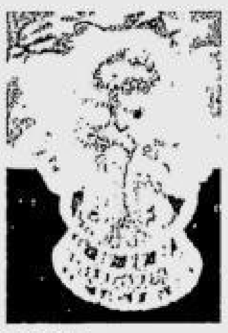
It was the desire to find a market for the many goods produced by worthy groups that led INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez and her classmate at the Asian Institute of Management, Marge Macasaet-Barro, to set up Gifts and Graces in 2005.

Both were inspired by the idea of being a "social entrepreneur" and they got other like-minded individuals hooked on the idea of truly helping others help themselves.

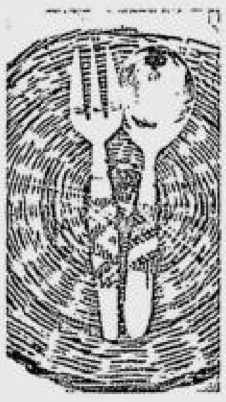
Comprising the board of Gifts and Graces are Ayala Foundation president Vicky Garchitorena, Figaro Coffee Corp. chief executive Pacita U. Juan, Marivic Limcaoco of Magoo's Pizza and Kawayan Cove, Mariles Gustilo of Lowe Lintas and AIM professor Francisco Bernardo III.

Their idea is not just to find a market for the product but also to improve the capabilities of these NGOs so they can make their products more sellable.

The products have to compete, after all, with the innumerable other options available in department stores and shopping centers.



NEW take on Christmas angels



BEADED homeware for sale

This means teaching them about design, color and variety, concepts that they did not worry too much about before Gifts and Graces came into the picture.

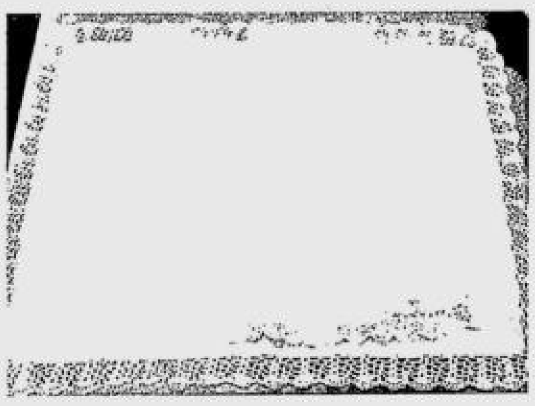
From an initial group of 10 NGOs, Gifts and Graces is now helping 15 groups, which include Development Action for Women Network (bags, aprons, slippers), Families and Children for Empowerment and Development Foundation Inc. (crocheted items, tote bags), Hardin ng Kalikasan Women's Multipurpose Cooperative (handmade paper), Holy Spirit Social Action Center (necklaces, small animals), Pambansang Kalipunan ng mga Manggagawang Impormal ng Pilipinas (bags, pillows, baskets) and PITAD Multipurpose Cooperative (planters, trays).

Love Gregorie M. Perez, Gifts and Graces executive director, said Gifts and Graces would invest in further upgrading the abilities of the current stable of 15 NGOs so they can improve their product line.

"We will probably not expand yet but rather go into capability building of communities so they can increase scale and improve their processes," Perez said in an interview.

Consumers can help them do just that by buying these "gifts that lift the spirit."

(For more information, call 7501010 loc. 2042).



CROCHET skills are passed on to women in poor communities

World's leading schools set up campuses in Singapore

SINGAPORE—ASIAN STUDENTS WHO traditionally looked to English-speaking Western countries for higher education are increasingly turning closer to home—to Singapore, educators say.

Backed by a government-led initiative to capture a slice of the great paper chase in Asia, Singapore has managed to woo more than 16 of the world's leading schools to set up campuses as part of the city-state's "Global Schoolhouse" ambition.

Singapore's education blueprint aims to attract 150,000 foreign students by 2015 in an industry that has mainly been the turf of American and British institutions.

There are currently 80,000 foreign students in Singapore, up from 50,000 in 2001, mostly from Malaysia, Vietnam, China, India and South Korea, government figures show.

The country's two main universities—National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University—are already held in high esteem by their regional peers but getting the world's elite schools to run courses here has further raised the city-state's academic standing, educators say.

"The splashy news coverage of several prominent foreign institutions entering Singapore has created visibility and awareness of Singapore as an alternative location for education, to the more traditional locations of the UK or US," said Narayan Pant, dean of executive education at global graduate business school INSEAD.

"Singapore has become a credible alternative to those well-known locations, especially for people in the region," he said.

Christopher Ziguras, associate professor of international studies at Australia's Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, said Singapore's well-defined goal of catering to global demand for higher education has paid off.

He said the city-state has successfully planted itself as a serious rival to institutions in Australia and New Zealand, the two main Asia Pacific study destinations for Asian students.

INSEAD, which also has a campus in France, was the first international business school to have a full-fledged Asian campus when the Singapore offshoot opened in 2000 offering MBA, executive MBA and PhD courses.

New York's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts, whose alumni includes Oscar-winning director Ang Lee, is the latest to set up a base in Singapore. Its Asia campus opened in October.

With the likes of INSEAD and other luminaries including North Carolina's Duke University offering specialized courses in Singapore, the city-state's standing as a high-quality destination for study has increased tremendously, said Pant.

INSEAD's decision to house its Asian campus in Singapore was logical given its cosmopolitan environment and strategic location in Asia, said Pant.

"Yes, China is a powerhouse and China is going to grow and yes India is growing, too, but those are very Chinese and very Indian stories," he said.

"To us, the cosmopolitan environment of Singapore, great logistics and location between India and China made it an ideal place to invite the rest of the world to come and learn about Asia." Malaysian student Andrew Fan started his one-year MBA study in September at INSEAD's Singapore campus. He says doing part of his course in the city-state allows him to market his Asian experience to prospective employers after he graduates.

"It is an opportunity to have the Asian and European experience. It allows us to broaden our horizon," he said.

That experience does not come cheaply.

Fan, in his thirties, paid 48,800 euros ($72,575) for his 10-month course and will do the other half of his study at INSEAD's campus near Paris in January.

"In terms of looking for jobs, if you are serious about Asia Pacific you should be networking with executives here," he said.

But not everyone has been so willing to enter the "Global Schoolhouse," an initiative implemented by Singapore's Economic Development Board (EDB).

Britain's prestigious Warwick University abandoned plans in 2005 to open a campus. It cited concerns over academic freedom in Singapore which has strict censorship rules despite being one of Asia's most advanced economies.

In May, the Singapore branch of Australia's University of New South Wales (UNSW) announced it would shut down.

AFP

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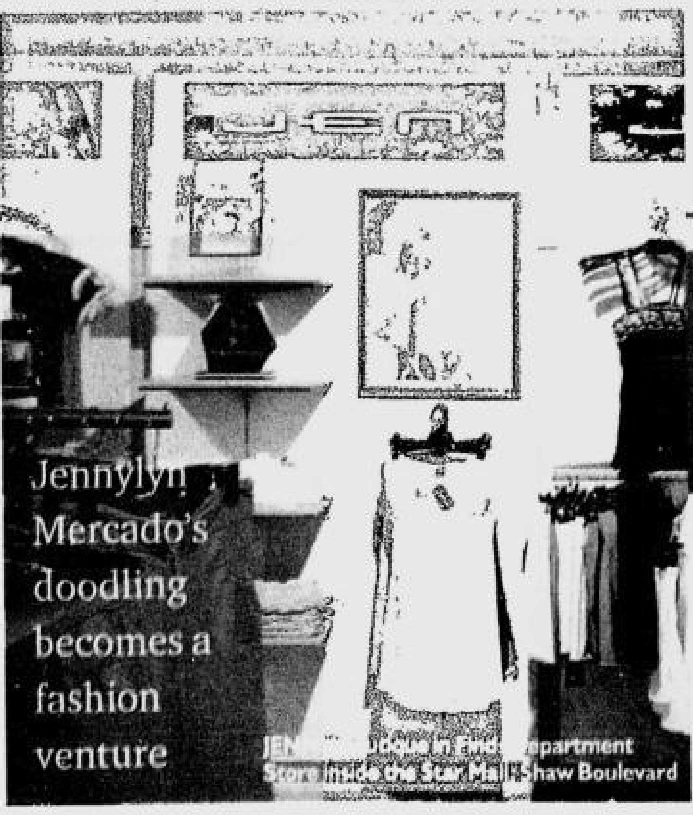
Jennylyn Mercado's doodling becomes a fashion venture

JENN's boutique in Finds Department Store inside the Star Mall Shaw Boulevard

A clothing star is born

By Christine A. Gaylican
Contributor

GMA NETWORK INC. MANAGEMENT honchos saw that Jennylyn Mercado has what it takes to be in show biz. Jennylyn's spunk, sometimes edgy but sophisticated attitude made her standout among the finalists in GMA 7's first season of the "Star Struck" talent show.

A year after her winning the P1-million contract and successful GMA 7 projects including a series of hit shows like her character as the sword-wielding fairy in "Engkatadia," Jennylyn found the need to unleash her creative instincts this time on print and paper.

"I really love designing clothes. When I am not very busy at work or in school, I am into doodling, sketching ladies outfits," shares Jenn in an interview with SundayBiz. "I love dressing up. It is amazing to make jaws drop and awe people with what you wear," she adds in jest.

The 5'7", tanned singer-actress believes that you don't need to be embellished to have that cool, favored look.

"You can still be a stunner with casual clothes," she notes. "Making casual clothes look a standout has been my goal."

Birth of Jenn's Boutique

Sketching and doodling with her pen and paper in-between school work and show appearances, Jennylyn found her home desk and luggage used to carry her stuff to tapings and shootings brimming and cluttered with her personal designs and sketches.

She explains that her manager, Becky Aguila, her relatives and close friends Mark and Camille Villar (children of Sen. Manuel Villar) saw the potential of her creations.

"They suggested that maybe it's time that I put those designs into life," she says. "They encouraged me to put up my own clothing boutique I simply named 'Jenn."

With the assistance of a good clothes manufacturer, Jennylyn's designs took shape in May 2005. Jenn's could be found in the Finds Department Stores in the Start Malls in Shaw Boulevard and Las Piñas.

Functional shirt designs

Inspired by the simple idea that a piece of clothing should have a variety of uses by just a twist of a knot in the waist and additional buttons, Jennylyn wants to make pieces of clothing with patterns unlike any other in the local fashion scene.

One of her most saleable piece is her personally designed shirt that could be altered into a semi-formal halter top, a tube for a formal attire and later into venus-cut design fit for a party maven.

She says that this is so far the most expensive piece ranging from P600 to P700.

Other items such as punk-inspired shorts, chiffon-billowing pirate blouses, sleeveless tops with embroidery or studs are reasonably priced at P199 to P400.

"We also carry clothes with sizes from extra small to triple (3XL) for women. We also try to duplicate some designs for children," she adds.

The clothes she had worn to her shows and concerts were also made for the shops and these are among the most saleable items in the store.

"We make sure that part of our marketing is a show or concert memorabilia," she says. "The fans just buy them."

The boutique business has been a very rewarding experience for Jennylyn that she aspires to pursue a college course in Fine Arts major in interior design.

In spite her busy schedule, Jennylyn is able to squeeze some time for her boutique that she co-manages with her show biz manager and co-owns with Mark and Camille Villar.

She confides that they got their return on investments after one year and are already profitable.

"We are planning to put up a third branch and maybe venture into our personalized cosmetics and fragrance line," Jennylyn says.

The outfit was worn by
Jennylyn at her first
solo concert entitled
Music in Me last
May 14, 2006 at the
Music Museum
CONCERT outfits are displayed in her boutique, part of good marketing, says Jennylyn

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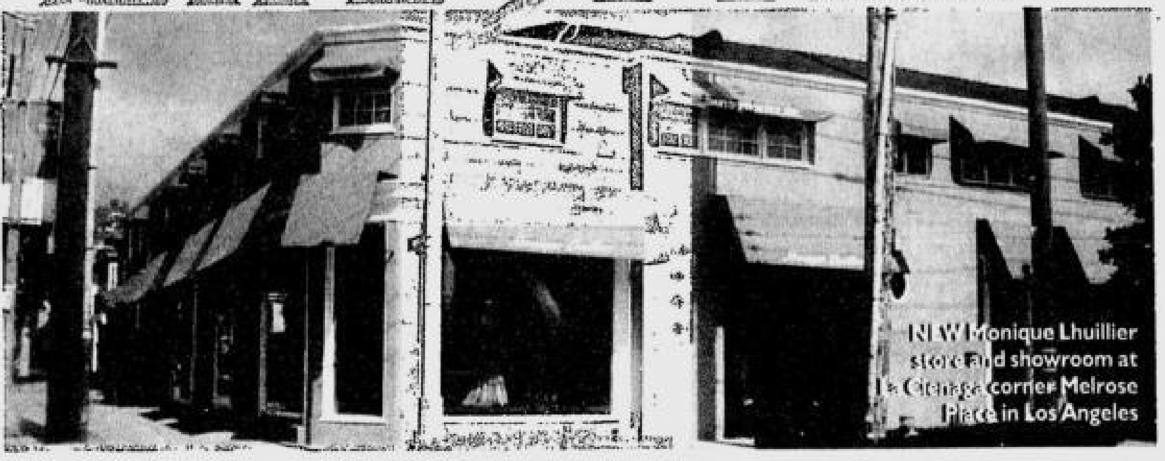
MARIA Shriver Schwarzenegger, wife of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, with designer Monique Lhuillier (center) and mom Amparito Llamas Lhuillier.



NEW Monique Lhuillier store and showroom at La Cienaga corner Melrose Place in Los Angeles

Monique Lhuillier's new 'neighbors'

CEBU CEBU
Jaime Picornell

California first lady Maria Shriver cut the ribbon at the opening of the new boutique of designer and Hollywood darling Monique Lhuillier

AMPARITO LLAMAS LHUILLIER ARRIVED recently from Los Angeles, California, where she attended the grand inaugural of a new store cum showroom of her celebrated daughter Monique. It is located at the corner of La Cienaga and Melrose Place in an area where you may find top names like Carolina Herrera, Oscar de la Renta, Giorgio Armani, the whole lot.

The store displays bridal gowns and formal evening wear, plus bags and a whole range of accessories all bearing the world-famous Monique Lhuillier label.

There is a place for the Monique-clad Barbie Doll, and a collection of Royal Doulton china designed by Monique. "The Femme Fatale line is the best," says Amparito with a giggle.

The opening was graced by Maria Shriver, wife of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Guests included glamorous film stars, editors of fashion glossies, jewelers, business tycoons, prominent Californians and valued clients.

"Thanks so much for coming, mom," whispered Monique in Amparito's ears. "How could I miss this?" countered Amparito, who was dressed in black (by Monique, of course) and wearing some fabulous pearl jewelry designed by her and all made in the M. Lhuillier Cebu workbench.

Many of the guests during the opening, and for days after, asked who Amparito was. When told, they invariably gave out an awed "Ah."

Well, Monique tells all and sundry how proud she is to have been born in Cebu, and how she learned all about refinement and style from her parents, Michel and Amparito, as well as from her late grandparents Henry and Angelita Lhuillier.

Very much present on this occasion was Monique's husband Tom Bugbee, a brilliant accountant by profession, and the chief executive officer of their growing enterprise.

MONIQUE/ C3

BEAUTIFUL bridal gown by Lhuillier on display at her store

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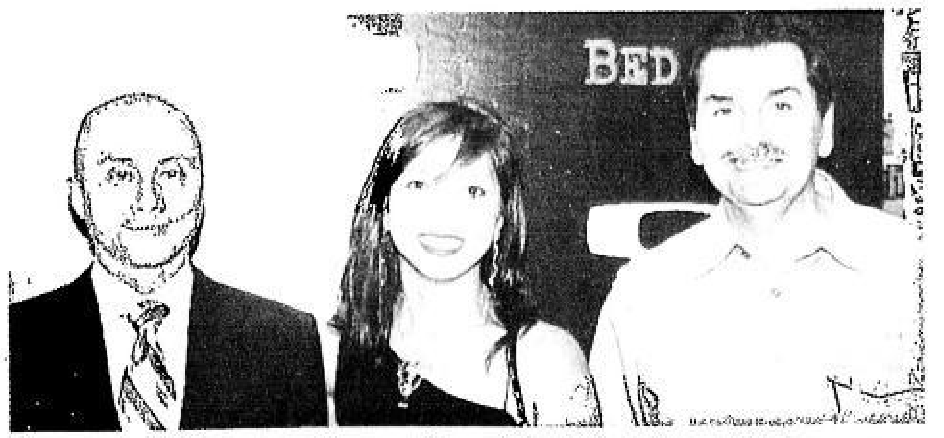
To redeem, cardholder must present his BPI Express Credit card and original charge slip (minimum of P500).
See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit [illegible] Series of 2007.

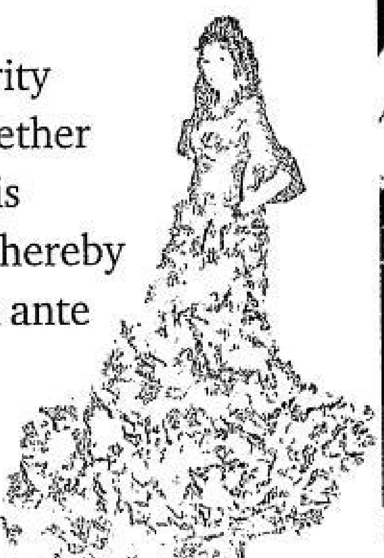

ERNIE and Jeena Lopez, and Oakley owner Ramesh Dargani

OAKLEY owner Dita Dargani and Kerri Uytengsu

OAKLEY endorsers Trisha Chiongbian, Jeanette Tuason and Fred Uytengsu

My own marathon man

At the Oakley charity event, I cajoled Diether Ocampo to bare his amazing abs and thereby upped the auction ante for his photo



TESSA!
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

LIFE IS TRULY LIKE A marathon race. As we run through the different forks on the road of life, we are greeted with a series of opportunities, challenges, pleasures and blessings. Which is exactly what a marathon race is—an opportunity to excel, a challenge to conquer, a pleasure to enjoy and a blessing to finish.

Among the many that have recently accomplished such a feat is **Nina Huang**, Town & Country's cover girl for December, who finished the NY Marathon a few months ago. In the issue, Nina talks about the rigors of training and the charities that she supports, which motivated her to finish.

Closer to home, several of my cousins just completed the Honolulu Marathon. Breaking the four-hour barrier was **Amanda Carpo**, with her sister **Leica** just minutes behind at 4:22, quite impressive considering this was Leica's first marathon. Both were happy to come in ahead of **Oprah Winfrey**, no slouch at 4:29.

I'm sure Leica will use her Hawaiian sojourn to have fun Waikiki designs and accessories mixed among the stylish, vintage indie fashions for sale at her quaint specialty shop, Modern Mythology (mobile 0915-9506786), located on the 2/F, Nail Spa, 109 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Modern Mythology is packed with excellent finds like "must-have" clothes and great shoes. It's an "insider's secret store" with treasures to discover at unbelievable prices.

My own twisted road to being a runner has had several detours this year. My running coach, Ani de Leon, has been expertly training me for months but suggested I pursue my marathon goal next year since I seem to have chosen a different fork in the road this year.

My cousins promised to do Honolulu with me next year so they can give me moral support as I run the race in a hula skirt and sequined bikini. I'm sure there will be a lot of cool, neon Nike gear to run with as well.

Ironman Jon-jon

For some, the life-is-marathon metaphor is just not enough. Another cousin, **Jon-jon Rufino**, just finished an Ironman triathlon. In the triathlon community, there's a saying that the Ironman, with its 3.8k swim, 180.2k bike and 42.2k run, doesn't build character, it reveals it.

The 19 athletes from the Polo Tri Team who joined the race in Western Australia earlier this month proved this by persevering through this day-long test of endurance. No one quit. Not Jon-jon, who was temporarily blinded by an allergic reaction to the event's sports drink, nor his friend Jay-Jay de Ocampo, who was in a bike pileup, got up and finished despite a bloody gash over his eyebrow that required five stitches after the race of course.

Among the finishers were Senator **Pia Cayetano**, completing her first Ironman, and **Geraldine Santiago**, who set the fastest pace for a Filipina in the Ironman distance, a record previously held by my coach, Ani. The fastest Pinoy was **Itong Torres**, although Englishman **Tony Welsh** was the fastest from Polo Tri Team.

Inspiring

I joined the team at Jon-jon's breakfast birthday party last week at Chef **Laudico**'s Bistro Filipino (tel. 8560634). These handsome businessmen have an inspiring schedule, starting their day with a 5 a.m. bike ride, run or swim.

Among the guests were my yoga buddies, **Liana Romulo** and **Cherry Du**, from Yoga Manila (mobile 0917-522YOGA, e-mail yogamanila@gmail.com), who have been inviting me back to practice. This Christmas, Yoga Manila will have a special series of Ashtanga yoga from Dec. 17-22 at Century Plaza Penthouse, 120 Perea St., Legaspi Village, Makati. Yogi Hoze Arando will be teaching classes at 9:30 a.m.

They will be also spreading yoga to the beaches of Boracay and El Nido, Palawan. Since I will head out to beautiful Discovery Shores for the holidays, I will definitely check out the twice-daily classes at Hey! Jude near Station 2.

Jon-jon's fellow tennis aficionados, including **Kit Zobel**, were also at the breakfast. It was truly an event of marathon proportions, with hardly any waistlines larger than 32 attending.

I bumped into Kit again at the uber-stylish birthday bash of Philippine Tatler editor **Anton San Diego** that evening at Nuvo's new VIP Lounge in Greenbelt 3. Disco-to-Resto-to-Lounge Master **Louie Ysmael** converted Nuvo's upper level to a sleek lounge bar with mega, smoke exhaust systems so we don't have our smoking friends constantly heading outside. The new lounge of Nuvo was thus packed, with so many style setters dropping in to greet Tatler's style maven.

Also celebrating his natal day that evening was restaurateur **Ricco Ocampo**. Since Ricco's intimate dinner was just at Kai Restaurant on the other side of Greenbelt, I was able to swing by and chat with his wife **Tina** and fellow columnist **Mons Tantoco** of Star before heading to Nuvo.

Charity

Louie Y proudly toured me around the VIP Lounge weeks ago during the Oakley Art Chantry - Art Charity event held at the outdoor section of Nuvo. Oakley recently launched its Signature Series shades with an artistic photo exhibit by ace photographer **Raymund Isaac**. These photos were then displayed and auctioned for the chosen charities of the celebrities.

Ever the naughty host, I cajoled hunk actor **Diether Ocampo** to bare his amazing abs and thereby upped the auction ante for his photo. Thanks to his abs flashing, The Kids' Foundation did well that night. What we do for charity!

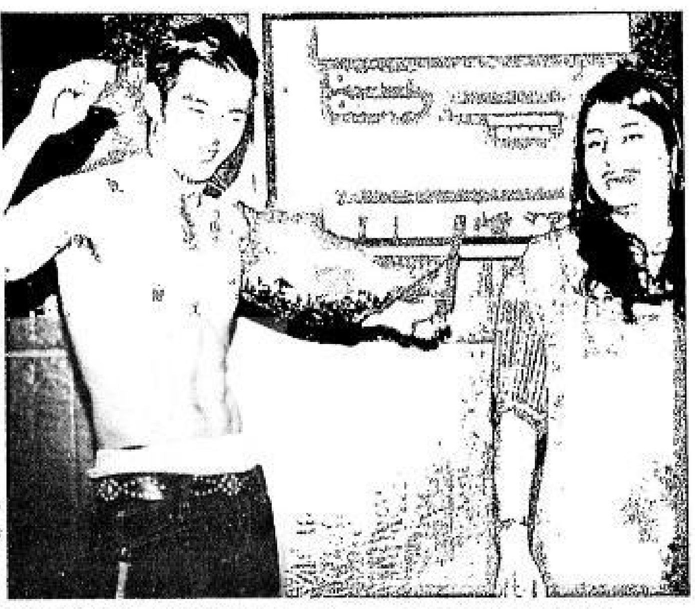
Samsung Metrowear

From Oakley, Amazing Race couple **Ernie** and **Jeena Lopez** and I went on to another hot brand—the Samsung Metrowear Holiday Collection Fashion Show at the Rockwell Tent. I am always impressed with the country's top designers but even more so with the new crop of fashion mavericks coming from Cebu. At Metrowear, **Cary Santiago** received astounding applause, as always.

Newcomer **Furne One**, a Dubai-based Cebuano talent, had a breathtaking collection. Viewing it was like watching modern art walking down the ramp. Furne's beadwork is as detailed as that on a Bea Valdes bag.

Some of the gowns were truly marathon efforts. And like a marathon, they will be an opportunity to acquire, a challenge to accessorize, a pleasure to wear and a blessing to have.

E-mail the author at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph


BARE FOR CHARITY. Diether Ocampo and Jasmine Dargani

MODERN Mythology owners Celine Gabriel and Leica Carpo

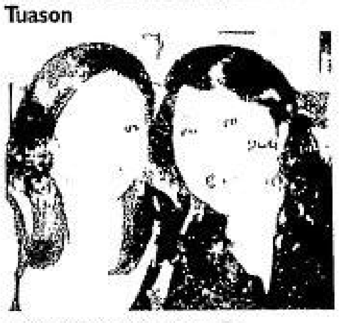
OUTSTANDING designer Furne One

SPLENDIDO team Chef Ed Quimson and owner Katrina Ponce-Enrile

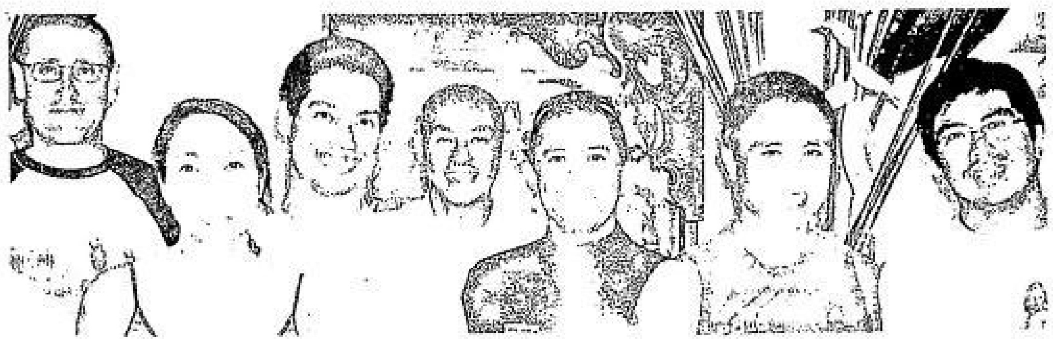
FAVORITE designer Rajo Laurel with model Suyen Chi

BADMINTON girls Carol Francisco and Rina Aguilar

RAYMUND Isaac and Jeanette Tuason


ELEGANT ladies Sandie Poblador and Irene Francisco

NOKIA couple Angelique Repapis and William Hamilton Whyte


POLO Tri Team/ Ironman finishers Tony Welsh, Ge Santiago, Jon-jon Rufino, Itong Torres, Joey Torres, Joel Ferrer and Jay-jay de Ocampo

METRO Society editor Raul Manzano, Monchet Olives and Tingting Cojuangco

FEATURED designer Tonichi Nocom, Wanda Louwallien and Metro Magazine editor Mel Cuevas

TENNIS buddies Kit Zobel, Jon-jon Rufino and Margo Flores

NUVO friends Pepper Teehankee, Möet-Hennessy manager Olga Azarcon, Sigalit Djemal and Joy Wassmer of Makati Shang

TALENTED Cebu designers Arcy Gayatin, Furne One, Jun Escario, Philip Rodriguez and Cary Santiago

BEAUTIFUL friends Tina Ocampo, Ruffa Gutierrez and Joji Dingcong

NUVO Man Louie Ysmael and gorgeous cousins Georgina Wilson and Belle Diaz-Daza

INTERNATIONAL School gang Pops Fernandez, Kit Zobel, Anton San Diego, Marianne Po, Donnie Tantoco and Claudia Tambunting

Tree of wishes

FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE year, The Peninsula Manila is sponsoring the Trees of Hope campaign, a Christmas charitable fundraising initiative for Make-A-Wish Foundation. Evergreen awaits additional decoration from guests, who are invited to buy an ornament to hang on the tree. Proceeds will benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation that grants children's wishes. The Peninsula Hotels also have "Trees of Hope Cocktails" and "Teas of Hope," a festive version of the Afternoon Tea in members of the chain. Make-A-Wish Foundation (www.worldwish.org) receives a donation with each cocktail and Afternoon Tea set sold.

An online Christmas gift-giving guide

AN ONLINE GIFT-SHOPPING WEBsite, www.RegaloService.com, gives you tips on how to make your loved ones feel happy and special through your gifts.

As you prepare your Christmas list, it is good that you device a system to make your budgeting easier. Create categories and subcategories to organize your list. Immediate family members, relatives, officemates, country club friends, godchildren, etc. may cover separate and different categories. Subcategories can then refer to the types and values of gifts assigned to the recipient like premium, mid-range, standard.

If you have a list made last year, it is good to review your current list against last year's to refresh your mind about what you gave the previous year.

Once you have set your budget, you need to do some pencil-pushing to determine your budget for the premium, midrange and standard subcategories. It would be good to prepare this with your Microsoft Excel or your preferred spreadsheet software so you can make adjustments with the budget per person and still come up with your set total Christmas-gift budget.

You may wish to assign a higher budget for those really close to you like those included in your immediate family category.

The budget you are going to allocate to your officemates will depend on the gift-giving culture of your office. So if you are just new in your office, it is good to ask around and know what is the customary gift-giving practice.

Again, review your list with its corresponding budget and, once you're happy with it, you are set to go shopping.

Again, go back to your list and put a little thought process into it. Think what each person will need or want to receive. Write it next to the name and budget you have given this person. For example, if your sister-in-law loves to cook, you can indicate there items that are kitchen-related then check them versus your allocated budget.

Bring this list whenever you go Christmas-gift shopping and use this as your guide.

Note that your Christmas list is just a guide so you can still make adjustments.

Once you are finished with the list, you can now proceed to the fun part of the exercise—shopping!

1. Online shopping—At www.RegaloService.com, you can enjoy full-service gift shopping as RegaloService.com takes care of procuring, gift-wrapping and delivery for you.

When shopping online, just be sure you are using a secured site (especially on the payment stage) and that the online shop is legitimate (check address and telephone numbers in their website).

2. Mall shopping—When doing so, it is advisable to go to the malls as soon as they open shop in the morning and have your shopping finished by lunchtime to avoid the humongous shopping crowd.

3. Community-bazaar shopping—When shopping at community bazaars, be a little bit more meticulous in checking product quality as most of the products being sold come from the "backyard" industry.

4. Making the gifts yourself—if you have the time and talent, you can make the gifts yourself and you will surely be appreciated for it.

It could be baked goodies, fashion accessories, etc.

JACK Nicholas, Monique and Tom Bugbee's son, playing with paints and crayons

Monique Lhuillier's...

From page C1

From a capital of $10,000 some 10 years ago, the business has metamorphosed into a million-dollar concern. The year 2008 will see further expansion and we know in what direction. We just can't say it yet.

At the opening, too, were Tom's parents, Tom Sr. and Dora Bugbee, with their daughter Kathy. A special guest from the Philippines was architect Conrad Onglao, who is doing the new house of Michel and Amparito on a hill with a terrific view at Maria Luisa Estate Park in Cebu. It will be ready by 2008.

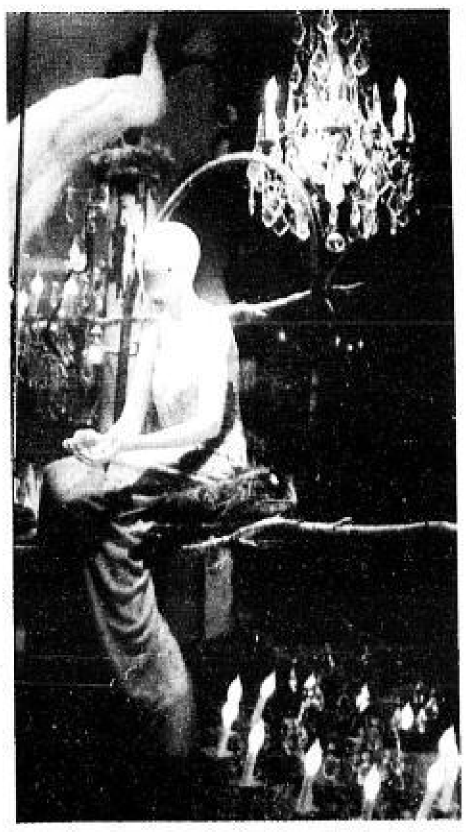
Following the opening, Tom and Monique hosted a small dinner party for close friends and family. Her publicist from New York led the toasts, stating, "She's great, and will even be greater!"

For six years in a row, Monique received the Bridal Designer of the Year citation based on a survey by the New York-based Wedding Bells magazine. This is just one of the many awards, trophies and plaques she received that could fill a huge wall.

What is her secret? Simple: She designs all the clothes with her label herself, and Tom does a terrific job. Ask any certified public accountant what cost accounting is all about.

Will Monique ever put up a shop in the Philippines? The question is often asked Amparito, whose eyes sparkle before she replies that she takes orders for Monique's gowns, and does the measurement herself.

It is very much like Amparito!



SLINKY evening gown by Monique Lhuillier worn by a stark white mannequin and set amid chandeliers

RED NIGHT
TMX

There are places you can't buy tickets to... This is one of them: THE MARLBORO EXPERIENCE

MARLBORO, the World's No.1 cigarette brand, brought to some of their lucky loyal adult smokers a premium experience of a different caliber, and rolling out the red carpet has never been this personal. Loyal patrons were treated to an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at how their favorite cigarette is made.

Dubbed **The MARLBORO Experience** or TMX, loyal MARLBORO adult smokers and their friends were given unprecedented access to the high-security, state-of-the-art Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc. (PMPMI) plant in Batangas. No ordinary field trip, the whole-day affair was filled with fun, entertainment and surprises, a wonderful and truly memorable once in a lifetime experience for long-time patrons of the brand.

The day began when the excited VIP guests arrived at a designated pick-up point where they received t-shirts specially designed for the event. PMPMI Managing Director Chris Nelson, was there to personally greet every guest, welcoming them warmly. Seeing all the **MARLBORO** gear at hand and meeting the top man of PMPMI, the loyal patrons were already overwhelmed early on in their day. After registering, they were welcomed aboard a luxury bus by a lovely **MARLBORO** Brand Ambassador who graciously hosted the trip.

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An online Christmas gift-giving guide

AN ONLINE GIFT-SHOPPING WEBsite, www.RegaloService.com, gives you tips on how to make your loved ones feel happy and special through your gifts.

As you prepare your Christmas list, it is good that you device a system to make your budgeting easier. Create categories and subcategories to organize your list. Immediate family members, relatives, officemates, country club friends, godchildren, etc. may cover separate and different categories. Subcategories can then refer to the types and values of gifts assigned to the recipient like premium, mid-range, standard.

If you have a list made last year, it is good to review your current list against last year's to refresh your mind about what you gave the previous year.

Once you have set your budget, you need to do some pencil-pushing to determine your budget for the premium, midrange and standard subcategories. It would be good to prepare this with your Microsoft Excel or your preferred spreadsheet software so you can make adjustments with the budget per person and still come up with your set total Christmas-gift budget.

You may wish to assign a higher budget for those really close to you like those included in your immediate family category.

The budget you are going to allocate to your officemates will depend on the gift-giving culture of your office. So if you are just new in your office, it is good to ask around and know what is the customary gift-giving practice.

Again, review your list with its corresponding budget and, once you're happy with it, you are set to go shopping.

Again, go back to your list and put a little thought process into it. Think what each person will need or want to receive. Write it next to the name and budget you have given this person. For example, if your sister-in-law loves to cook, you can indicate there items that are kitchen-related then check them versus your allocated budget.

Bring this list whenever you go Christmas-gift shopping and use this as your guide.

Note that your Christmas list is just a guide so you can still make adjustments.

Once you are finished with the list, you can now proceed to the fun part of the exercise—shopping!

1. Online shopping—At www.RegaloService.com, you can enjoy full-service gift shopping as RegaloService.com takes care of procuring, gift-wrapping and delivery for you.

When shopping online, just be sure you are using a secured site (especially on the payment stage) and that the online shop is legitimate (check address and telephone numbers in their website).

2. Mall shopping—When doing so, it is advisable to go to the malls as soon as they open shop in the morning and have your shopping finished by lunchtime to avoid the humongous shopping crowd.

3. Community-bazaar shopping—When shopping at community bazaars, be a little bit more meticulous in checking product quality as most of the products being sold come from the "backyard" industry.

4. Making the gifts yourself—if you have the time and talent, you can make the gifts yourself and you will surely be appreciated for it.

It could be baked goodies, fashion accessories, etc.

Tree of wishes

FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE year, The Peninsula Manila is sponsoring the Trees of Hope campaign, a Christmas charitable fundraising initiative for Make-A-Wish Foundation. Evergreen awaits additional decoration from guests, who are invited to buy an ornament to hang on the tree. Proceeds will benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation that grants children's wishes. The Peninsula Hotels also have "Trees of Hope Cocktails" and "Teas of Hope," a festive version of the Afternoon Tea in members of the chain. Make-A-Wish Foundation (www.worldwish.org) receives a donation with each cocktail and Afternoon Tea set sold.

JACK Nicholas, Monique and Tom Bugbee's son, playing with paints and crayons

Monique Lhuillier's...

From page C1

From a capital of $10,000 some 10 years ago, the business has metamorphosed into a million-dollar concern. The year 2008 will see further expansion and we know in what direction. We just can't say it yet.

At the opening, too, were Tom's parents, Tom Sr. and Dora Bugbee, with their daughter Kathy. A special guest from the Philippines was architect Conrad Onglao, who is doing the new house of Michel and Amparito on a hill with a terrific view at Maria Luisa Estate Park in Cebu. It will be ready by 2008.

Following the opening, Tom and Monique hosted a small dinner party for close friends and family. Her publicist from New York led the toasts, stating, "She's great, and will even be greater!"

For six years in a row, Monique received the Bridal Designer of the Year citation based on a survey by the New York-based Wedding Bells magazine. This is just one of the many awards, trophies and plaques she received that could fill a huge wall.

What is her secret? Simple: She designs all the clothes with her label herself, and Tom does a terrific job. Ask any certified public accountant what cost accounting is all about.

Will Monique ever put up a shop in the Philippines? The question is often asked Amparito, whose eyes sparkle before she replies that she takes orders for Monique's gowns, and does the measurement herself.

It is very much like Amparito!

SLINKY evening gown by Monique Lhuillier worn by a stark white mannequin and set amid chandeliers

RED NIGHT
TMX

There are places you can't buy tickets to... This is one of them:

THE MARLBORO EXPERIENCE

MARLBORO, the World's No.1 cigarette brand, brought to some of their lucky loyal adult smokers a premium experience of a different caliber, and rolling out the red carpet has never been this personal. Loyal patrons were treated to an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at how their favorite cigarette is made.

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Senate spouses play Santa

SOME 60 KIDS FROM THE Tahanang Mapagpala Foundation were recently treated to a day of fun, food and shopping at the SM Megamall by SM and members of the Senate Spouses Foundation.

Each of the Senate Spouses present played mom for a day to the kids as they shopped for their Christmas wishes at the SM Department store.

The group included Rep. Cynthia Villar, who heads the Senate Spouses, as well as Eloisa Fernan, Susan Flavier, Mila Drilon and Bing Pimentel. Fely Arroyo and Lani Mercado Revilla also joined the group, which included first timers Rep. Laarni Cayetano and Audrey Zubiri.

Sen. Noynoy Aquino and the wives of Senators Chiz Escudero, Jinggoy Ejercito and Jun Magsaysay also sent their representatives.

SM officers led by SM president Tessie Coson welcomed them.

After a snack at Wendy's, the group proceeded to the department store where the kids had fun as they shopped for clothes, shoes, bags, accessories and toys.

After a hectic shopping day, they then proceeded to Jollibee for *merienda*.

"Christmas in November" is an annual project of the Senate Spouses Foundation Inc. And SM, and is now on its ninth year. It is for the benefit of the children of Tahanang Mapagpala.

SM PRESIDENT Tessie Sy Coson with the members of the Senate Spouses Foundation Inc.

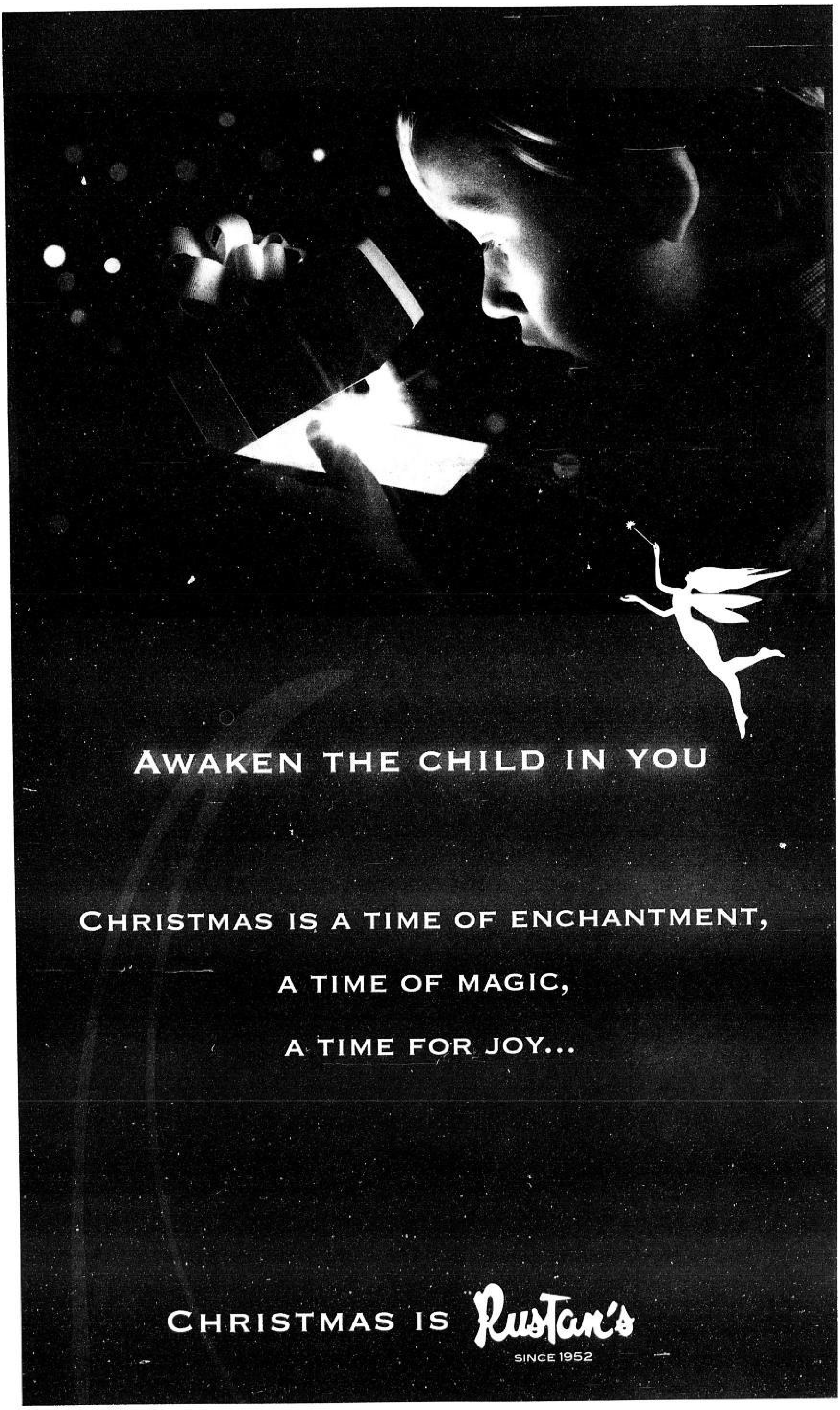
MRS. SUSAN Flavier plays mommy to five little cute girls.

LAWYER Felicitas Arroyo shops for stuff with the kids.

MRS. ELOISA Fernan helps her ward shop items at SM.

A FIRST-TIMER in the "Christmas in November" project is Rep. Laarni Cayetano.

AUDREY Zubiri, also a first-timer, helps her kid go through stuff at SM Department Store.



SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 16, 2007 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER D1

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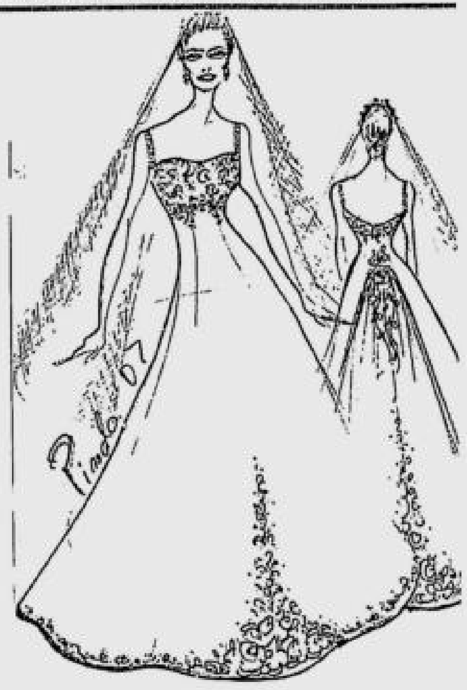
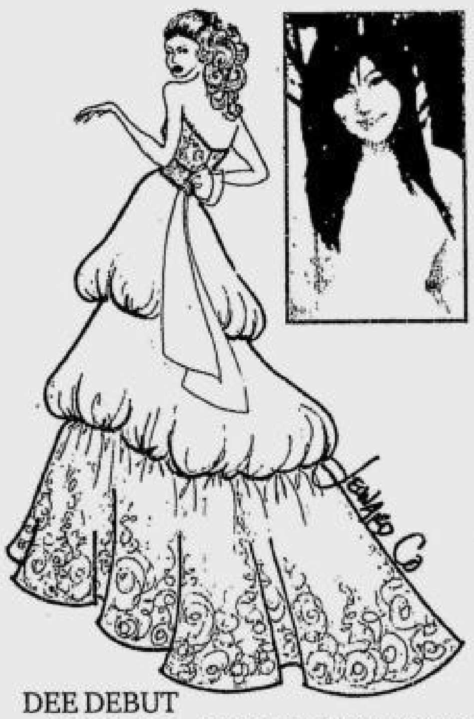
Sunday LIFESTYLE

Text us your feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, *P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.*





DEE DEBUT

Valerie Dee, daughter of **Vicente** and **Lily Dee,** celebrated her 18th birthday recently at the Century Park Hotel. The debutante wore a marine blue metallic shantung silk with ecru organdy in double layer bubble skirt embroidered in two-tone ecru with silver and fully beaded, designed by **Leonard Co.** She is a fourth-year high school student at St. Jude Catholic School.

NEALAGA-SALCEDO

Ariel Nealega, son of **Apolinar** and **Salvacion Nealaga,** will wed **Cynthia Salcedo,** daughter of (ret.) Supt. **Domingo** and **Leticia Salcedo,** on Dec. 22 at the Peñafrancia Basilica Minore and National Shrine in Naga City. Reception will follow at the Villa Caceres Hotel, Naga City. The bridal gown was created by Bicol-based fashion designer **Felix Villote.**

MENDOZA-BUGA-AY

Juan Bernardo Paredes Mendoza III, only son of **Bernie** and **Charito Mendoza,** will wed **Lovella Coloso Buga-ay,** only daughter of **Vicente** and **Ofelia Buga-ay,** on Dec. 22 at Queen of Peace Church in Bacolod City. The bride will wear a bustier top with ruching and embellished with crystal beads and Swarovski by **Lourdes Lipa.** The bias skirt has an embroidered train.

MADUCDOC-DE LA CRUZ

Joniel Maducdoc, son of **Nathaniel** and **Josefina Maducdoc,** will wed **Rashid de la Cruz,** daughter of **Jaime** and **Rosalinda de la Cruz,** on Dec. 16 at the Blue Gardens in Quezon City. The bride will wear a **Junel Lim Gallon.**

CONTRERAS-MADELAR

Dr. **Christopher Contreras,** son of **Marina de la Cruz vda. de Contreras** will wed Dr. **Candice Seva Madelar,** daughter of engineer **Edilberto** and **Suzette Madelar** on Dec. 22 at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Legazpi City.

AGAPITO-DE LA PEÑA

Marlon Agapito, son of **Jesus** (deceased) and **Cristina Agapito,** will wed **Michelle de la Peña,** daughter of **William** and **Adoracion de la Peña,** on Dec. 17 at the Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, QC.

Eric Pineda designed the bride's gown in ivory bridal satin. The empire-cut bodice is embellished with faux pearls, caviar beads and iridescent pailletes in an arabesque beadwork pattern. The cathedral train will be held by a bouquet of handmade organdy cabbage roses and pleated petals. A 10-meter veil of double-width illusion tulle held by Swarovski crystal pins completes the ensemble. Reception will follow at the church Function Hall.

HONG DEBUT

Dominique "Nikki" Hong, daughter of **Nicanor** and **Jocelyn Hong,** celebrated her debut with a party recently at the Luzon Ballroom of Sofitel Philippine Plaza.

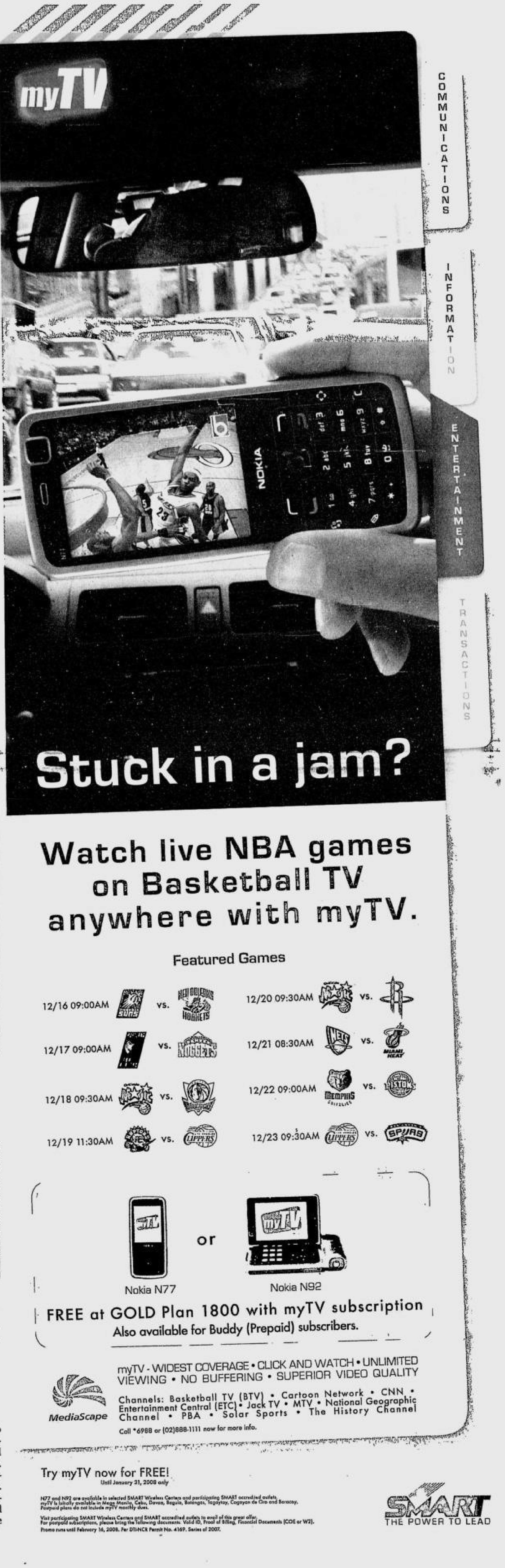
Nikki wore a multi-tiered taffeta gown designed by **Kate Torralba.** She is a sophomore at Miriam College majoring in accounting.

DY-CO

Dennis Michael Dy, son of **Genaro** and **Remedios Dy,** will wed **Catherine Co,** daughter of **Robert** and **Lolita Co,** on Dec. 22 at the Basilica of San Sebastian Church, Quiapo, Manila. A dinner-reception will follow at Century Seafood Restaurant, Manila.

ILAGAN-ESTRELLES

Ronilo Triviño Ilagan and **Sol Deduro Estrelles** will tie the knot on Dec. 16 at Fernwood Gardens (Phase 1), QC. **Edward Teng** designed the bridal gown and the groom's tuxedo.



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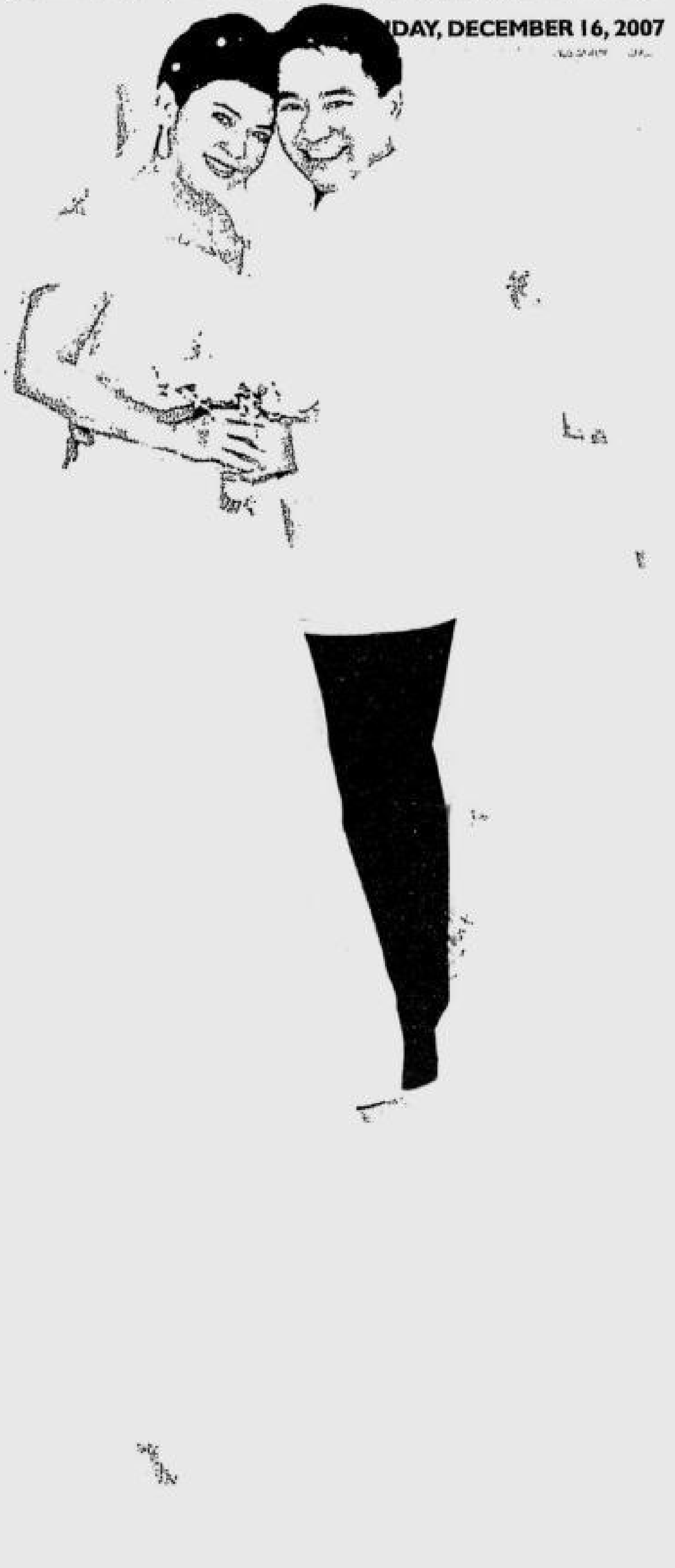
SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

THE WEDDING entourage: Merce Rivera, matron of honor; Chrissy Muego, bridesmaid; Wendy Ozamiz, maid of honor; the bride and groom; Patrick Rivera, Joel Zapanta and David Sesdoyro, best men; (front row) Ekaterina Sesdoyro, flower girl; Jeremy Zapanta, ring bearer; and Anton Sesdoyro, coin bearer



RIVERA-SESDOYRO NUPTIALS

Love bridges time and distance

MASO, David and Mike

JOHN Lesaca

MEL Meer

MARIPI Muscat

SHE WAS BARELY 14 WHEN HE first saw her on a poster of the popular '80s band Hotdog. He was a teenager on his way to the United States to join the rest of his family.

At that time, it seemed they were fated to live worlds apart.

Some 20 years later, Ma. Socorro Perez Sesdoyro, more popularly known as Maso Diez, was the vocalist of Spirit of '67, a popular retro music band. Before that, she earned awards as a solo singer and was also lead vocalist of top bands.

In the US, Michael "Mike" Castrillo-Lesaca Rivera, after a stint in the US Marine Corps, had become president of ProView Inc., a benefits administration company based in Irvine, California.

In 2005, Rivera was back in the Philippines on business. He finally met Sesdoyro, his teenage crush, in person for the first time.

As he set up ProView Global's offices in Ortigas, Rivera also started a friendship with Sesdoyro. The friendship later turned to love.

He watched her performances at the Conway's in Makati Shangri-La and Captain's Bar at the Mandarin Oriental and everywhere the Spirit performed.

On a trip to Singapore, Rivera made plans to propose to Sesdoyro.

He arranged everything from the five-star accommodations, the dinner menu, the wine, red roses and, of course, the ring. "After searching for the perfect setting, I decided that a romantic dinner inside a cable car overlooking the city would be memorable," Rivera said.

Then he invited her for dinner, making sure the ring was in his pocket. "The view from the cable car was magnificent, but an even more beautiful sight was Maso, the love of my life," Rivera said.

He was so nervous, she asked, "Why are you sweating so much?"

Finally, taking a deep breath, he revealed the ring and looked in her eyes.

Rivera said, "I felt the tears start to well up in my eyes as I asked her to marry me (holding the jewelry box with the ring)... I nervously waited for her response. She said, 'Puss, the ring is upside down.'"

Rivera said he did not notice he accidentally flipped the jewelry box and the ring was in danger of falling into the ocean.

"That comical moment led to a few minutes of laughter...," he mused. "But as soon as the laughter died down... I finally heard Maso utter the one word I had been wanting to hear. As tears started to well up in her eyes, she said, 'Yes.' Whew!"

Back in their hotel, Sesdoyro was in for another surprise. The hotel staff, on Rivera's request, had prepared a suite, complete with a bottle of champagne, white chocolates and five dozen roses around the room.

THE COUPLE with the bride's parents Cecilia Perez-Sesdoyro and Ramon Diez-Sesdoyro

WEDDING cake by Penk Ching

"I dropped to my knees, making sure this time I had the ring perfectly positioned," Rivera said. "So, once more, I asked her to marry me."

Sesdoyro said, "And once more I said 'Yes!'"

Less than a year later, the bride, glowing in an ecru *piña* gown designed by friend Patis Tesoro, walked down the aisle of the chapel of the Wack Wack Country Club in San Juan, the white interiors filled with calla lilies.

The groom, dapper in an embroidered Mel Meer barong jacket, also in ecru, beamed as he waited at the altar. He was flanked by his best men and Sesdoyro's 12-year-old son David, who was very happy for his mom.

Her dad, veteran broadcasting and media executive and former race car driver Ramy Diez-Sesdoyro, kept his teary-eyed daughter steady as she glanced at her mom, Cecilia Perez, and niece-bridesmaid Chrissy Muego, seated at the front row.

Godmothers and members of the entourage in rust-colored gowns hurriedly handed the bride a box of tissues.

Rivera's parents, lawyer Mars Rivera and Angela Lesaca-Castrillo, were unable to attend but his brother Patrick, who flew in from Los Angeles with wife Merce, sang at the wedding.

Everyone was teary-eyed as the couple read the marriage vows.

Mario Katigbak, another friend, designed the couple's Bulgari wedding rings.

Reception followed at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila in Makati where they enjoyed a buffet of French cheeses, chilled fruits and red and sparkling white wines.

A Tuscan-inspired dinner followed. The room was filled with flowers done by Jun Hen. Two chocolate fountains flanked the dining area.

As guests dined, photographs of the wedding taken by Pat Dy were flashed on a wide screen, as well as other photos of the newlyweds and David on trips to Amanpulo, their favorite getaway.

Penk Ching, a self-confessed Spirit of '67 fan, created a multi-layer confection capped by bride and groom dolls seated inside a cable car.

Patrick sang another love song followed by a stirring violin solo by John Lesaca, the bride's longtime friend who turned out to be Rivera's cousin. The bride's eldest sister Maricel was the evening's emcee.

Lights were later turned off to give way to musical mime by the Black Light Theater. Mae Bayot, Sesdoyro's former colleague, did a couple of RnB songs.

The Spirit of '67—minus Sesdoyro, of course—performed their repertoire of standards and retro music as guests, led by godparent Sen. Richard Gordon, danced till past midnight.

GODPARENTS Beth Romualdez, Rosie Awad, Cynia Mascariñas, Nympha Valencia, Sen. Richard Gordon, Mario Katigbak, Johnny Velasquez and Alex Wasilewski flank the couple.

EMILY'S POST
Emily Marcelo

Should she give up her job for her marriage?

DEAR EMILY,

My husband and I have been married for almost 12 years but we were not blessed with kids.

I used to work in a company in Manila but resigned because we underwent fertility treatments. Two years ago I got an offer to work in a prestigious hospital here in San Diego, California.

My husband allowed me to go with the mutual agreement that he would follow once I got settled. A few months after I left Manila, he was offered a job in Singapore as a manager.

In the two years that I have been in the United States, he would come and visit me every six months. But he is not doing anything to find work here in the US.

Like most Asians, my husband is afraid that he will not get any position like the one he has in Singapore.

Last month, I discovered that he has been having an on-and-off affair for the past six years with a family friend in Manila. When I confronted him and gave him an ultimatum, he sent an e-mail to the girl, with a copy to me, saying he wanted to give our marriage another chance.

I gave him another chance, but he does not want to come here. He wants me to follow him in Singapore and leave my job in the US.

My dilemma is, what if I follow him to Singapore and he becomes unfaithful again and leave me eventually? After giving him another chance, should he not be the one to follow me to the US so we can start our lives again?

JAY

To be young, able-bodied and strong, with hormones kicking—and alone?

Did you really expect this macho Asian guy to live without a woman beside him? Isn't that a recipe for disaster?

Okay, you have forgiven him but he refuses to budge from where he is. My question to you is, is it very difficult for you to follow him and be the one to try your luck in Singapore?

It may sound unfair considering he was the one who strayed, but we are rescuing a marriage here! Why not bend over backward and make it a priority to save this marriage first—if it is worth saving...

You two are locking horns and trying to defend your own turf. For a marriage on the brink of a breakup, that does not augur well, does it?

Forget his infidelity for a moment and try to solve this job crisis between you and your husband. Take a reasonable time off from your work and case the joint in Singapore for job possibilities.

With your qualifications, shouldn't you be confident enough to find your own place in the sun and develop strong roots there as well?

You cannot have it both ways. What you want is total assurance that you will only give up your old life if your new life will be 100-percent great and dandy. Well, life does not work that way.

There are no crystal balls to see the future clearly as it unfolds—much as we all dream of one.

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. *Log on to www.pbs.gov.ph and listen to Ms Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.*

GK-BATANG Bayani representatives Gary Reyes and Kirby Llaban; Nickelodeon Asia's marketing and communications manager Ana Pulido; Mayor Joey Medina and his sons spearhead the groundbreaking of the Nickelodeon Batang Bayani GK Village in Pateros.

Big help for the poor

IT IS ON THE 30TH OF NOVEMBER when Filipinos commemorate our nation's heroes. It was, therefore, the ideal day for everyday heroes from Nickelodeon's The Big Help Campaign and Gawad Kalinga-Batang Bayani to hold the groundbreaking rites of "Nickelodeon Batang Bayani GK Village" in Pateros, Rizal, the site where 30 houses or more will be constructed with the money collected from the special Big Help canisters. It brought hope and the promise of a better future for many families who will be the beneficiary of this social undertaking.

The Big Help Campaign 2007 is based on the premise that every little bit counts and empowered kids by giving them a means through which they can do something for their community. This year, Nickelodeon focused on the action word "share."

At the groundbreaking ceremonies were Pateros Mayor Joey Medina, Pateros Vice Mayor Jojo Sanchez, Gawad Kalinga regional coordinator Dolphy Lanuza, GK-Batang Bayani representatives Gary Reyes and Kirby Llaban; and Nickelodeon Asia's marketing and communications manager Ana Pulido. Log on to www.nicksplat.com/bighelp for more info.

Intercontinental Manila All Set For A Pinoy Christmas

MANILA, December 3, 2007 ... This year InterContinental Manila celebrates the Christmas season the Filipino way in food, décor and activities. Renowned Filipino floral architect and artist, Rachy Cuna, has been tapped to decorate the hotel's exterior and interior areas. The ever ingenious Mr. Cuna gathered various folk crafts from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao to come up with unique and beautiful Christmas trees, wreaths, and table arrangements. Gold painted bamboo tree branches are festooned with white capiz shell discs, star-shaped lanterns (parols) of white capiz shells and gold papier maché and origami birds of buri leaves. Wreaths of raffia are embellished with papier maché jeepneys, horses, and Pinoy townsfolk. The grand stairway leading to the ballroom is decorated with twinkling stars of natural abaca fiber and a graceful arch of gold painted bamboo branches. There are trees made of salakot hats in gold and red, balls of Manila hemp and anahaw fans fashioned into cones. Guest floor Christmas trees have bases with Muslim okir motifs. At the front driveway are Philippine lanterns of capiz held aloft on bamboo poles and a gigantic Nativity tableau (belen) in shimmering gold metal and wire mesh reminiscent of Angono's gigantes. The Jeepney Deli Shop which opens out to the hotel lobby has a nipa hut (bahay kubo) façade with lots of folk craft decorations. Inside, guests will find a fantasy collection of gingerbread houses, chocolate Santas and angels. Christmas logs and puddings, cakes, cookies, candies and other eye-catching and yummy confections all for sale. Just next to it is a stall that serves freshly made puto bumbong and bibingka daily from 8 AM to 9 PM.

A concert of Christmas carols will be held at the lobby from December 16 to 24, 2007 from 6:30 PM to 7 PM. The line-up of performers include the world famous Pangkat Kawayan (Bamboo Orchestra), The De La Salle University Chamber Ensemble and Transchorale.

A Christmas Eve Mass will be celebrated at 7 PM on December 24 at the hotel.

After the Mass, guests can partake of the sumptuous holiday buffet at Café Jeepney or Prince Albert Rotisserie's gourmet set menu as well as special a la carte items. Both restaurants will be open for lunch and dinner on Christmas Day. Kids will get a chance to meet and greet Santa at the lobby and the restaurants on December 25 from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM.

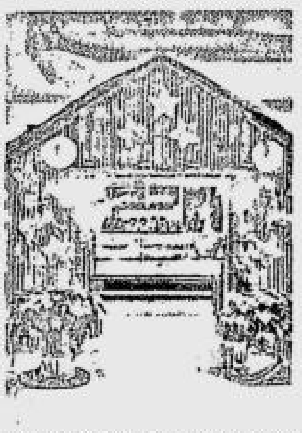
The Sol y Sombra poolside restaurant will have its daily Pinoy Street Eats promotion from 5 PM to 10:30 PM. For only P 650 per person, guests can enjoy Filipino street delicacies 5-star style for as much as they want. Fried fish and squid balls, okoy, pork and chicken barbecue, boiled corn and peanuts, chicharon, lumpiang gulay, tokwa't baboy, ice cream, balut, penoy, kikiam, burong mangga, taho, buko and melon juice, and other yummy treats are for the asking. Guests can partake of the food inside nipa huts in the sprawling poolside garden.

Paskong Pilipino room packages are being offered for local and returning residents (balikbayan). Overnight rates are at P 5,500++ for a Deluxe Room.

P 6,500++ for an Executive Room, P 7,500++ for a Club Room and P 9,000++ for a Junior Suite. Other suite category rates are available too. Package inclusions consist of Filipino breakfast buffet for two at Café Jeepney, shopping privileges at SM Makati's KULTURA, cold sago and gulaman welcome drink upon guest arrival, 50% discount on admission fees for two at the Ayala Museum, free use of hotel gym facilities and swimming pool, complimentary newspaper and free parking. Club InterContinental and suite guests will have access to the Club Lounge at the top floor. The hotel's Club Lounge is regarded as one of the most beautiful among InterContinental hotels in the world. All guestrooms and suites are newly renovated and boast of well-appointed amenities. This package is valid from December 1, 2007 to January 6, 2008 except on December 31, 2007 as there will be a set of different packages for New Year's Eve.

For those who would like to see Manila's historical landmarks and major tourist attractions in the company of an experienced tour guide, tour passes for a "hop-on, hop-off cultural heritage tour/shopping and leisure tour" are available at the Concierge Desk for only P 300 each. Air-conditioned Filipino jeepneys will ferry tour participants.

For reservations and more information on InterContinental Manila's holiday offers, please call 793 7000 or visit the Holiday Lobby Desk which will be open from 10 AM to 7 PM until December 31, 2007



Mabuhay 2008!

Welcome 2008 at Ayala Avenue's No. 1 address, InterContinental Manila. Avail of special room packages and exciting dining and party options.

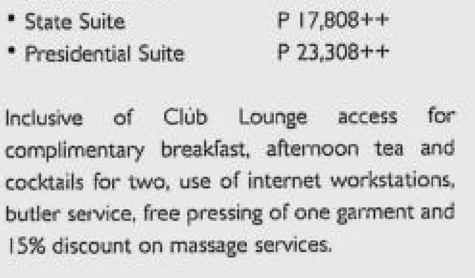
NEW YEAR'S EVE ROOM PACKAGES

Stay in a Deluxe Room for only P 7,808 ++ or in an Executive Room for P 8,808++ buffet breakfast or lunch for two at Café Jeepney on January 1, 2008 included.

Splurge a bit more. Book a luxurious Club Room or suite.

• Club Room	P 9,808++
• Junior Suite	P 10,808++
• Premiere Suite	P 12,108++
• Executive Suite	P 15,408++
• State Suite	P 17,808++
• Presidential Suite	P 23,308++

Inclusive of Club Lounge access for complimentary breakfast, afternoon tea and cocktails for two, use of internet workstations, butler service, free pressing of one garment and 15% discount on massage services.



CLUB INTERCONTINENTAL NEW YEAR'S EVE EXCLUSIVE

For only P 11,608++ for single and P 14,508++ for twin accommodation, enjoy an elegant 4-course dinner at the Club Lounge in addition to the aforementioned perks. Dinner will be limited to 40 guests.

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTIES

MASQUERADE PARTY, BAHIA ROOFTOP

11 PM to 4 AM (January 1, 2008)

Get a great view of the city skyline. Dance to the music of the Rhythm & Babes band. Enjoy a buffet spread of hot and cold pica-pica, desserts and free-flowing non-alcoholic drinks for only P 1,200 per person. The most creative mask gets a prize.

COUNTDOWN CELEBRATION, GAMBRINUS BAR

8 PM to 1 AM (January 1, 2008)

Song diva Margarita Saludo and saxophone player Ray Ama will entertain you with your favorite songs. There will be a minimum charge of P 600 (consumable) per person.

Holiday Diary

Here are dates to take note of this season.

December 1, 2007 to January 6, 2008
7:00 AM - 10:00 PM, Jeepney Deli Shop
- Sale of Christmas goodies and hampers

08:00 AM - 09:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- Bibingka and Puto Bumbong

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December 16 to 24, 2007
06:30 PM 07:00 PM, Hotel Lobby
- Concert of Christmas Carols

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December 24, 2007
06:00 PM 12:00 MN, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Eve Dinner Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM
- Christmas Eve Mass

07:00 PM 11:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Eve Dinner Set Menu
(P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years)
An a la carte menu is also available.

……

December 25, 2007
11:30 AM 02:30 PM, Hotel Lobby/Restaurants
- Meet and Greet Santa

11:30 AM – 02:30 PM, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Day Lunch Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

12:00 NN 03:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Day Lunch Set Menu
(P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years)
An a la carte menu is also available.

06:00 PM 10:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- Christmas Day Dinner Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM -10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- Christmas Day Dinner Set Menu
(P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years)
An a la carte menu is also available.

December 31, 2007
06:00 PM 12:00 MN, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Eve Dinner Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

06:00 PM 10:00 PM, Club InterContinental Lounge
- New Year's Eve Cocktails and Dinner
(Exclusively for Club InterContinental and suite guests)

07:00 PM
- New Year's Eve Mass

07:00 PM - 10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- New Year's Eve Dinner Set Menu
(P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years)
An a la carte menu is also available.

08:00 PM 01:00 AM (Jan. 1, 2008), Gambrinus Bar
- New Year Countdown Celebration
Featuring Margarita Saludo and sax player Ray Ama
(P 600/person minimum charge)

11:00 PM 04:00 AM (Jan. 1, 2008), Bahia
- New Year Countdown Masquerade Party with Cocktail Buffet
Music by Rhythm & Babes Band
(P 1,200/person)

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January 1, 2008
06:00 AM 10:30 AM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Breakfast Buffet
(P 900/person)

11:30 AM 03:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Lunch Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

06:00 PM 10:00 PM, Café Jeepney
- New Year's Day Dinner Buffet
(P 1,600/person)

07:00 PM - 10:00 PM, Prince Albert Rotisserie
- New Year's Day Dinner Set Menu
(P 3,250/person, P 1,850/child under 12 years)
An a la carte menu is also available.

For reservations and more information, please call 793 7000 or visit our Holiday Lobby desk from 10 AM to 7 PM until December 31, 2007.

Quoted prices are inclusive of VAT and are subject to 10% service charge and local government tax of .6% for rooms and .8% for food and beverage.

INTERCONTINENTAL.
MANILA
DOT Accreditation No. H-029-2007

COMPLETE THE CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE AT THE PODIUM AND THE BLOCK SM City North Edsa

Traditionally, December is a very busy season. In preparation for the upcoming holidays, everyone is either busy shopping for presents or enjoying countless holiday parties. A lot of times, the actual enjoyment of the season and all it offers takes the backseat.

This Christmas, make sure you have the time and energy to enjoy the season fully. Shop at The Podium and The Block for the widest range of premium, holiday selections that your friends and loved ones would love to receive. From the most stylish fashions to the coolest new toys, both for kids and kids at heart, everything's here! Completing your shopping list is a cinch. You might even find a gift or two for yourself as well.

Amidst all that shopping, stop for refreshments at one of the restaurants. Take your pick: from light meals to substantial feasts to specialized cuisines. No matter what you're craving for, here, you'll surely find something to satisfy it.

Afterwards, take a breather from all that shopping and dining and enjoy the finer pleasures of the season. Take your pick among the various holiday events and activities at The Podium and The Block. Choose from the liveliest Christmas shows like the Trumpets Christmas Fairytale Ville Musicale to the most soulful, inspiring Christmas concerts, featuring a selection of the nation's top singing groups and performers. And in the evenings, enjoy the most spectacular holiday fireworks displays.

Shopping, dining, and entertainment. No matter what you're looking for, at The Block and The Podium, it's all here.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN STYLE

The biggest and most desirable brands of the season are yours for the taking.
Don't delay. Indulge on the season today.

THE PODIUM
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center

THE BLOCK
SM City North Edsa
SM North Edsa, Edsa cor.
North Avenue, Quezon City

THE LOUNGE at THE PODIUM

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

A Yuletide Carol Extravaganza

Hear the sounds of Christmas as the country's finest chorales and orchestras serenade you with heartwarming Christmas favorites.

Ryan Cayabyab's Glee Girls Group
Led by Choir Master Emi Cayabyab
December 18, 7pm

UP Manila Chorale
December 20, 5pm

Xavier Glee Club
December 21, 3pm

DLSU Pops Orchestra
December 22, 5pm

Las Piñas Boys Choir
December 23, 5pm

UP Singing Ambassadors
December 24, 5pm

Grupo Querdas Strings
December 26, 5pm to 7pm

Christmas Musical Shows

Bask in the spirit of Christmas as you watch these specially selected Christmas shows.

Trumpets Christmas
Fairytale Ville Musicale
December 16, 5pm

Ateneo Highschool Symphonic Ensemble
December 19, 6pm

Angelos: The Four Tenors
December 25, 7pm

3-DAY SALE'S LAST DAY!
December 16, 10am to 11pm

DECEMBER MALL HOURS

Dec. 1 - 30*
10am - 10pm

*Except on:
Dec. 24 and 31 (Mon)
9am - 7pm

Jan. 1, 2008
12nn - 10pm

THE ATRIUM at THE BLOCK SM City North Edsa

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

A Yuletide Carol Extravaganza

Sit back and relax as the country's best musical performers serenade you with Christmas carols.

U.P. Vocal Ensemble
December 17, 6PM

Ateneo Highschool Symphonic Ensemble
December 18, 6PM

Philippine Youth Ensemble
December 19, 6PM

U.P. Singing Ambassadors
December 20, 6PM

Angelos: The Four Tenors
December 22, 4PM

The Mandaluyong Children's Choir
December 23, 6PM

Fireworks Display

Dec. 16, 22, 23, 29 and 30, 8pm

DECEMBER MALL HOURS

Dec. 1 - 30
10am - 10pm

Dec. 14 and 21
10am - 11pm

Dec. 15, 22-23
10am - 12mn

Dec. 24 and 31
9am - 7pm

Jan. 1, 2008
12pm - 9pm

Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Dutch treat

Amsterdam is the city of the possible, where Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' can get as much attention as the Sex Museum

Text and photos by Gibbs Cadiz

ONE OF Amsterdam's oldest churches, the 15th-century Oude Kerk, is located right in the midst of the city's famous Red Light District. The church is in use only on Sundays; for the rest of the week it can be rented out as a venue "where one can dine exclusively and where it is possible to hold presentations and receptions," as its online brochure puts it.

A similar utilitarian arrangement governs its more worldly neighbor. Under Dutch law, the prostitutes working in the Red Light District are recognized as a professional class. They work for only eight hours a day, pay their taxes, receive medical care and welfare, and are allowed to unionize.

The sacred and the profane in a cordial, live-and-let-live arrangement. You might call this the Dutch way, and every social conservative's nightmare. Many of the flashpoint issues that have flummoxed other First World countries—prostitution, gay marriage, euthanasia, drug use—inspire no hand-wringing here. The famously tolerant Dutch have managed to finesse them with surprising open-mindedness and sobriety.

Thus, in Amsterdam, Holland's sparkling capital, bustling streets like the Damstraat host shops and stores that are a breathtaking mix of the bohemian and the cosmopolitan, reflecting the country's unique cultural watermark.

Chic haberdashery and strong coffee beckon to passersby side by side with mountains of cheese, traditional souvenir items and sex paraphernalia. Cheerfully lighted sex shops share cramped street space with quaint indie bookstores and cafés, while hazy pubs offer a choice of pastries laced with marijuana.

Since pot smoking is tolerated in this country (though heroin and cocaine remain illegal), some

DUTCH/ E2

Christmas
Comfort
Foods

Enjoy the hearty freshness of our array of baked goodies. Simply hot off the oven or styled to your heart's delight, Christmas has never been this filling...

So have yourself a fresh and fab Holiday only at Rustan's Supermarket!

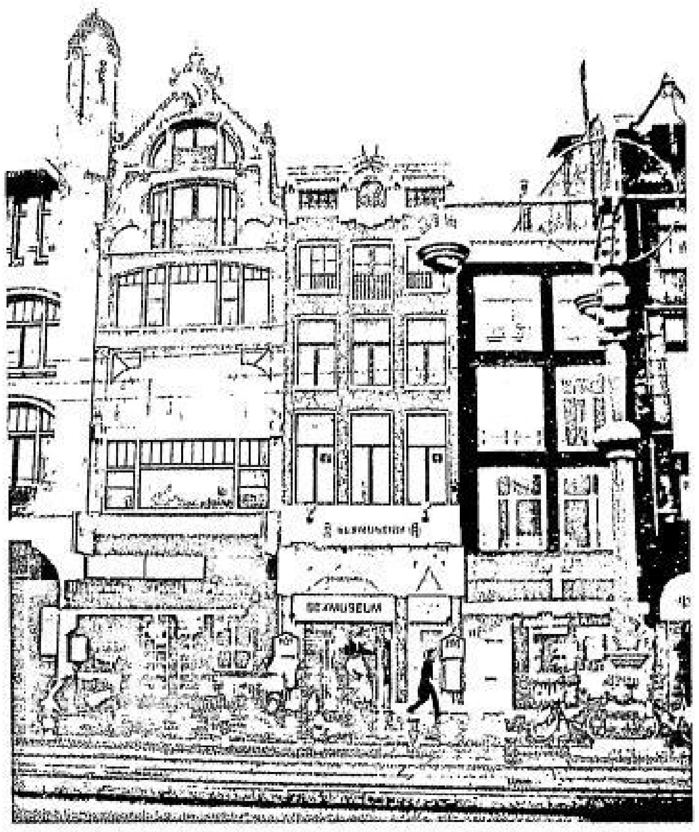
Get Fresh & Fabulous this CHRISTMAS at Rustan's SUPERMARKET

Where shopping for food is a pleasure

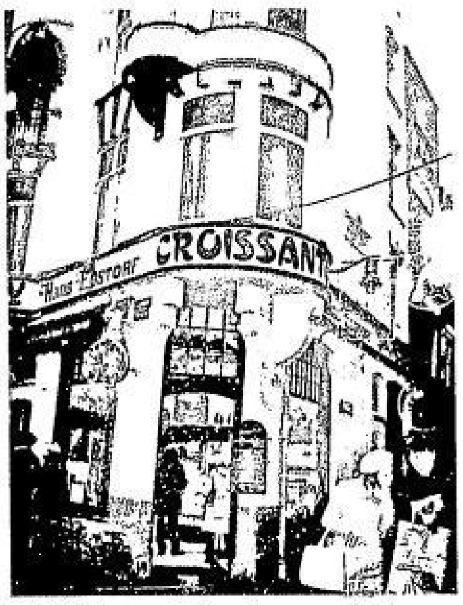
Makati | Shangri-La Plaza | Rockwell | Gateway
San Antonio | Greenbelt | Katipunan | Magallanes
Corinthian Hills | Banawa, Cebu | Ayala Center, Cebu
Alimall | Ayala Alabang | Boni | Edsa Taft | Fairview
Farmer's Plaza | Marikina | Mercedes-Pasig
Sta. Rosa Laguna | Starmall | Zabarte-Caloocan

THE 17TH-CENTURY Royal Palace in Dam Square

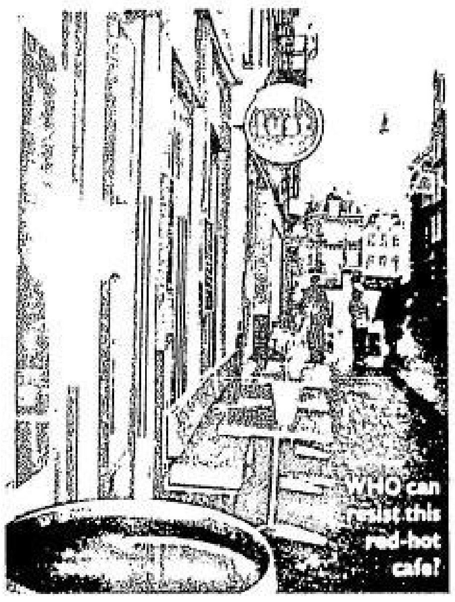
Dutch treat



AMSTERDAM's quirky attraction, the Sex Museum in the brightly-lighted and otherwise family-friendly district of Damrak



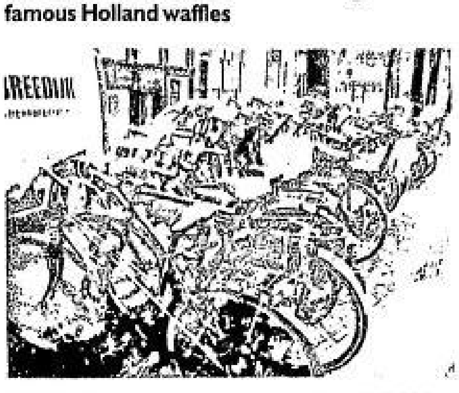
QUAINT corner bakery is a warm sight on a cold and rainy afternoon.



WHO can resist this red-hot cafe?

"SHIRTS and cappuccino"—a surefire combination

TAKING time to pose while hawking the famous Holland waffles



BIKERS' paradise. Amsterdam has 500,000 bikes and 15,000 km of total biking space.

From page E1

stores are dedicated to selling the best varieties of weed. "World-class cannabis seeds," reads one.

Republican spirit

The easy-going, laissez-faire attitude of the Dutch is not an aberration. The people who started populating the mouth of the Amstel River as early as the 13th century and who rose to global maritime and economic power in the 17th century are the hardy products of harsh conditions throughout history.

Holland itself, a marshy, unstable place situated below sea level, is a country won inch by inch from the sea. Amsterdam's shimmering canals, festooned with over 800 bridges, is a constant reminder of the power of water over its fortunes.

Fortunately, when the Dutch overthrew the Spanish occupiers in the 16th century, they built for themselves a country ruled not by a royal aristocracy, but by a forward-looking intelligentsia—mostly immigrants and merchants who, by the next century, would make Amsterdam the greatest mercantile and trading center in the world.

That robust republican spirit, worlds away from the courtly affectations of its European neighbors, gave the Dutch a fierce sense of independence, open-mindedness and empathy. It also made their country a haven for the persecuted, especially during the tumult of the Reformation years.

The current Amsterdam skyline, in fact, is marked by the spires of Protestant and Catholic churches adjoining the domes of Jewish synanogues. Just beside the Westerkerk (West Church), a Protestant citadel with the highest bell-tower in all of Amsterdam, is the house where Anne Frank and her family hid from the Nazis and where she wrote her diary.

Along with the Jewish Historical Museum and the Amsterdam Historical Museum, the museum in her honor is now a must-see destination for historically-minded visitors.

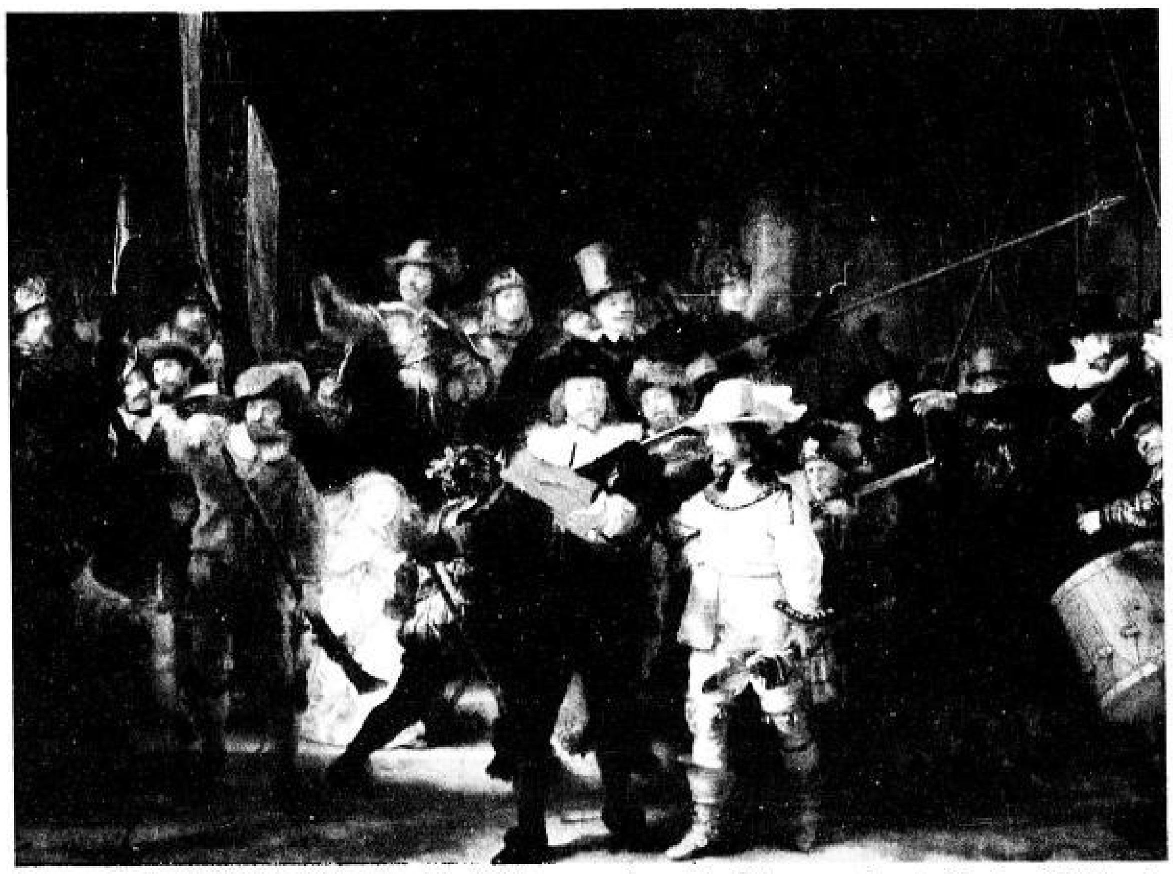
Dense urbanscape

That liberal, populist streak is alive as well in Dam Square, the heart of Amsterdam and the very spot where the ancient Batavians (the ancestors of the Dutch) built their first settlement in the 1200s.

The square is now the site of the 17th-century Royal Palace, an imposing structure with none of the stiff, forbidding air of other royal residences. And for good reason. Amsterdam's leaders at the time intentionally designed the building as a democratic town hall. Its most magnificent feature is a sweeping ceremonial space called the Citizen's Hall.

Holland's current monarch, Queen Beatrix, uses the palace and the adjoining Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) only for ceremonial functions, preferring to live instead in The Hague. From June to September every year, the building is open to the public. Its premises are not gated or marked off by uniformed guards. In fact, promenaders and passersby are free to sit right on the palace steps or duck under its intricately designed awnings once the rains come. (It rains 200 days in a year in Amsterdam.)

Opposite the palace is the National Monument, a white obelisk built in 1956 to honor the victims of World War II. The usual starting point for all walking tours of Amsterdam, the spot was renowned for years as a hippie mecca, drawing artists, bohemians, and free spirits from all over Europe who wanted to savor the charms of one of the world's most tolerant cities.



REMBRANDT's monumental "The Night Watch," the centerpiece of the Rijksmuseum's vast collection of Dutch art

Amsterdam, a dense urbanscape of mostly historic architecture ringed by efficiently regulated freshwater canals and rivers (they never overflow, and are only about three meters in depth), has a population of 780,000, some 51 percent of whom are single, making Amsterdam a vibrantly young, casual city.

The streets are lined with distinctive structures built upward, since space has always been a premium and taxes are levied on sprawl. The narrow elongated houses often sport a hoisting hook at the top—the only way to haul in furniture and other large stuff given the constricted entrances.

Residents pay some 4,000 to 6,000 euros per sq m for these apartments, which come with no balcony, no garden and no parking space. Parking itself is a luxury at 4 euros an hour, and the waiting list for a parking permit is said to exceed 15 years.

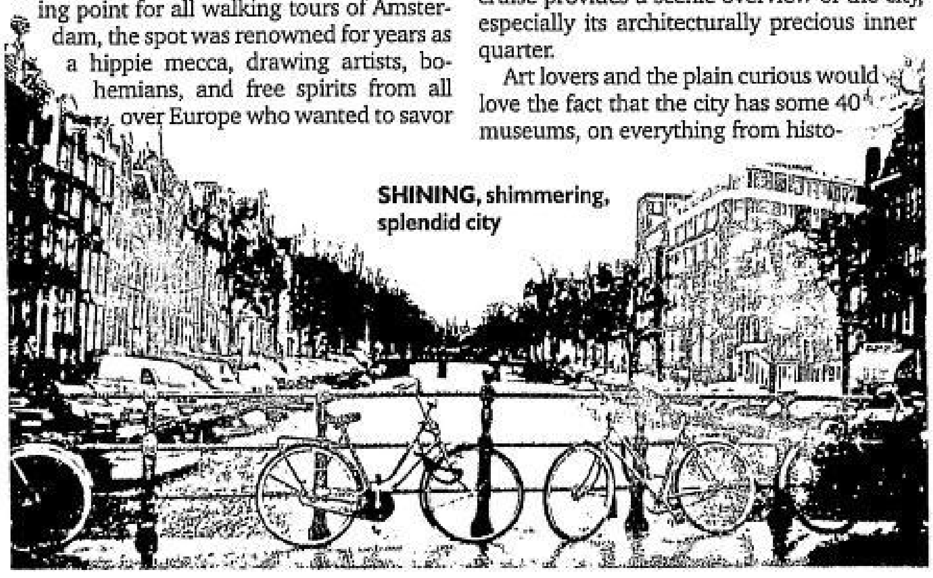
The steep price for housing has unexpectedly led to one of Amsterdam's chief charms: its house boats. They're moored everywhere on the canals—completely livable dwellings that are taxed more cheaply than their land-bound counterparts, though the owners also have to apply for a permit.

Taxes are also imposed on cars and even on dogs, since they are considered premium acquisitions in a city with very limited terra firma. But Amsterdam's compact size also means that almost everything is within walking or biking distance. The city is really for bikers, with 15,000 km of total biking space and some 500,000 bikes.

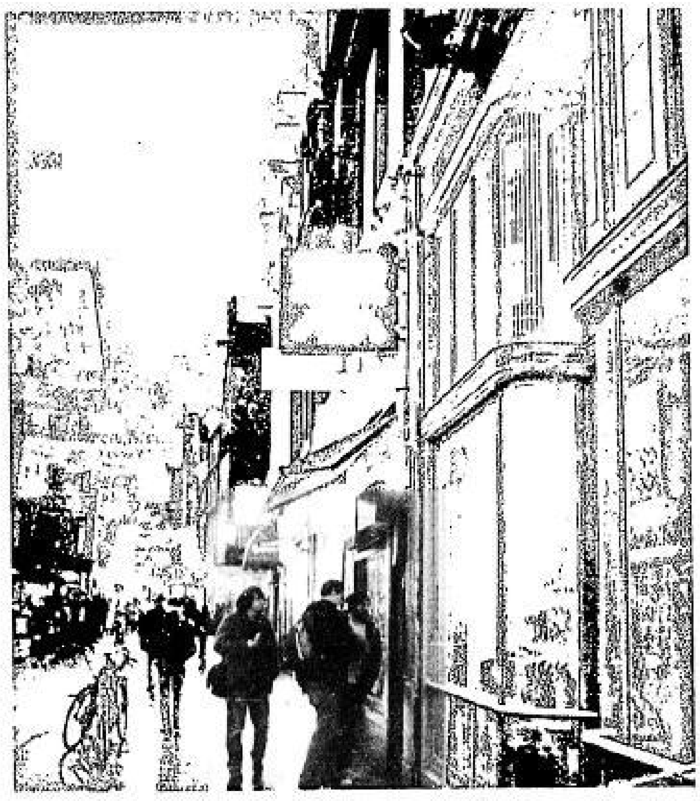
Scenic overview

Because everything is within easy reach then, Amsterdam is best experienced on foot, on a bike, or on a boat. A leisurely canal cruise provides a scenic overview of the city, especially its architecturally precious inner quarter.

Art lovers and the plain curious would love the fact that the city has some 40 museums, on everything from history and anthropology to sex and fashion. The Sex Museum is one of the most-visited spots on the Damrak, a commercial thoroughfare lined with colorful boutiques, food stops and shops.



SHINING, shimmering, splendid city



THE SIGN says "Porno Supermarket, Demonstration Video."

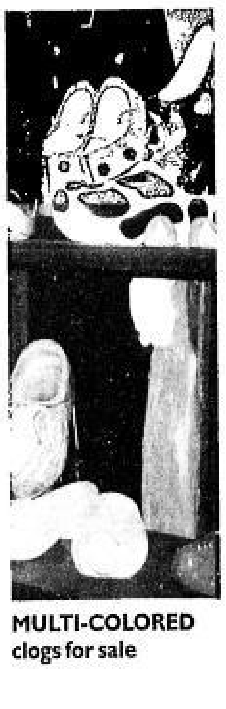
There's also a Tropical Museum, a Torture Museum, a Heineken Museum (celebrating Holland's national drink), even a Museum of Bags and Purses.

Of course, taking pride of place in these art destinations are the Rembrandt Museum, Van Gogh Museum and Rijksmuseum, which houses a vast collection of Dutch art mostly from its 17th-century Golden Age. This includes pieces by Vermeer as well as Rembrandt's monumental "The Night Watch." Vermeer's "The Girl With a Pearl Earring" is not here, however, but in The Hague.

Van Gogh's "Sunflowers," meanwhile, is the crown jewel of the museum bearing his name, along with other popular works like "Wheatfield with Crows" and "The Potato Eaters." Photographs are not allowed in any of these hallowed places, but at the Sex Museum, one can happily click away.

Art, sex, commerce, beauty, history, religion. "In Amsterdam," said our guide, "anything is possible." Now that's a treat.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gibbscadiz.com



MULTI-COLORED clogs for sale

Rallying for RP and real estate

Text by Anne A. Jambora

THEY CAME, THEY SAW, but in the end it was the Philippines who conquered their hearts.

Despite the recent political turmoil, unfazed top global players in the real estate, marketing and event management industry with no less than 30 years of experience behind them recently assembled together as the country played host to the first-ever Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference (Aireec).

"I'm truly grateful to those who showed up at the expo and conference, those who trusted what I said when I told them it was okay to come here to the Philippines," Susan Barlin, president liaison to the Philippines of the National Association of Realtors and special envoy for Investment and Tourism Promotions of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

A real-estate practitioner, Barlin is a strong advocate of a borderless world, who said that lifestyle, technology and travel developments make the trend of international second-home buying a more appealing prospect.

The Aireec 2007 provided an excellent opportunity for both international and local industries to promote, introduce, network, venture into and explore the many possibilities for business growth. Held at Philippine International Convention Center, the Aireec was for five days the global venue to position products and services among manufacturers, vendors, engineering and technology companies, architectural firms, resorts, hoteliers, trade and professional associations, and corporate end users from the private and public sectors.

The country recently played host to the first-ever Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference

RJ AND Friends JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

"I love branding," Barlin continued, "and I want to promote the Philippines as the lifestyle destination in Asia." The theme for this year was "West Meets East Meets West."

Filipino banquet

To get her point across, a pre-Christmas dinner celebration of music, songs, dances and Filipino cuisine welcomed the Aireec delegates and guests at the SMX Convention Center on Seashell Lane, SM Central Business Park in Bay City, Pasay.

Dubbed "Manila Citylites @ Christmas," the welcome dinner party, hosted by the Philippine DOT, treated the foreign and local delegates to a sumptuous banquet of Filipino dishes whipped out by Travel Café Phils.

How else, after all, to express the richness of Philippine culture than through a generous offering of local food?

Travel Café Phils. served both traditional and innovative dishes to reflect the international influences and flavors that have found their way into Filipino recipes.

There was the Pan De Sal Corner filled with *pan de sal* stuffed with Laguna Cheese and Steak, and *menudo*; and Pasta Station that featured sauces such as Aligue Aioli and Caldereta.

Main courses included Chef's Adobo, Braised Oxtail in Peanut Sauce, Saranggani Classic and Beef Tenderloin in Soy Calamansi.

There were also Paella Valenciana, *lechon* and liver sauce, and local desserts like *nanka* cream cake, fruit *suman* sushi, *leche flan* and more.

OSCAR P. Palabyab (left), DOT Tourism Service and Regional Offices Undersecretary; Susan Barlin (above), multi-awarded entrepreneur
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Entertainment was provided by host/singer Pinky Marquez, who regaled foreign delegates with her silky voice, and a live band performance by RJ and Friends.

"Christmas is shared by everyone in the Philippines," said lawyer Oscar P. Palabyab, undersecretary, Tourism Service and Regional Offices, DOT. "We want our delegates to bring home with them fond memories and come back again to make their investment a reality."

Already, Barlin said, 29 top real-estate developers and hotel and resort operators are scheduled to visit the country for an ocular inspection in February next year.

Barlin remains optimistic despite the bad rap the country has been receiving from the international press. Part of her aspiration is to brand the Philippines as the undiscovered jewel destination in Asia.

"I want to show off the beautiful side of the Philippines, that we are wonderful and warm-hearted people, that we can be trusted. When you do something other than the pursuit of making money, nothing will stop you from reaching your goals," Barlin said.

Aireec 2007 was staged by the US-based company Expo and Conventions Promotions Inc., a company that aims to deliver events that focus on finding solutions for companies and organizations to help them expand in the global marketplace.

EVENING host and singer Pinky Marquez (center) JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Pleasures Delight, 200

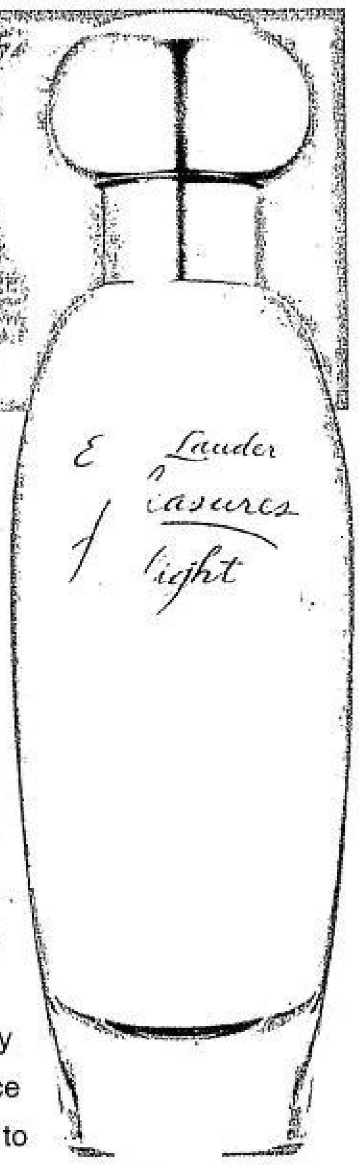
Estee Lauder's newest pleasure is creamy, delectable fragrance that reminds us of fresh fruit. The scent is fascinatingly textured - freesia, ros and lilies provide the floral bouque pomegranate and strawberry fruitiness, and caramel, marshma and vanilla give it a shot of sweetness

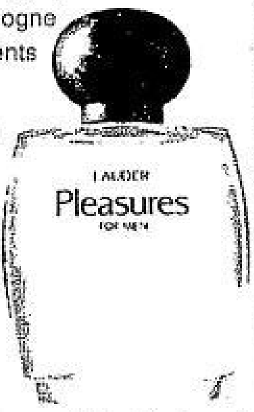
Pleasures' Mine

To some, pleasure is found in merry-making and frivolity; to others, it is about being close to nature and good company. Estee Lauder captures all the simpler joys in Pleasures, a fragrance born in 1995 and one of its most successful scent lines. A sign of its endurance? Four different embodiments, a limited-edition artist-designed bottle, and even one for the man of our lives.

Why so many variations you may ask? "As the largest global fragrance franchise, it only makes good sense to infuse new energy into the Pleasures family," says Aerin Lauder, senior vice-president and creative director of the company.

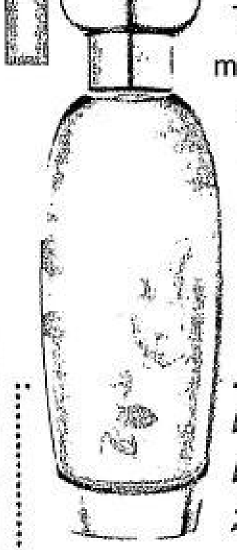
American actress Gwyneth Paltrow has fronted the Pleasures campaign since 2005, taking over from British actress Elizabeth Hurley, the face for the brand's Re-Nutriv skincare line. According to Lauder, "Gwyneth represents what we're about - elegance, style and quality... a perfect fit for the Pleasures concept."





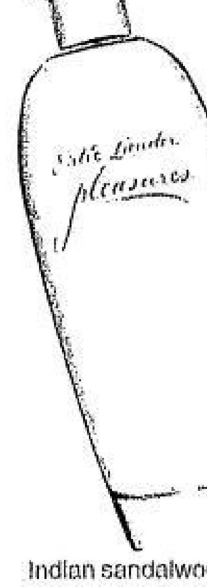
Pleasures For Men

Pleasures cologne was launched by Estee Lauder in 1997. This fine masculine fragrance is enveloped with nectarine, ginger, pimento. Pleasures cologne contains accents of coriander, sandalwood, and moss Combine Pleasures with the aftershave for a long lasting fragrance. Pleasures cologne is ideal for formal and casual use.



Pleasures Exotic, 2005

Estee Lauder bottles the sparkling sun-drenched sensation of a tropical setting into Pleasures Exotic. Infusion of familiar tropical favourites like hibiscus, bougainvillea, lychee, dewy green leaves and island bamboo flowers, together with a delicious shot of Mango Passion Fruit Cocktail, give the scent an invigorating juicy vibe. The signature Pleasures clarity and freshness is retained by the scent of the Basic Rose, which is a spice native to Reunion Island despite its flower name.



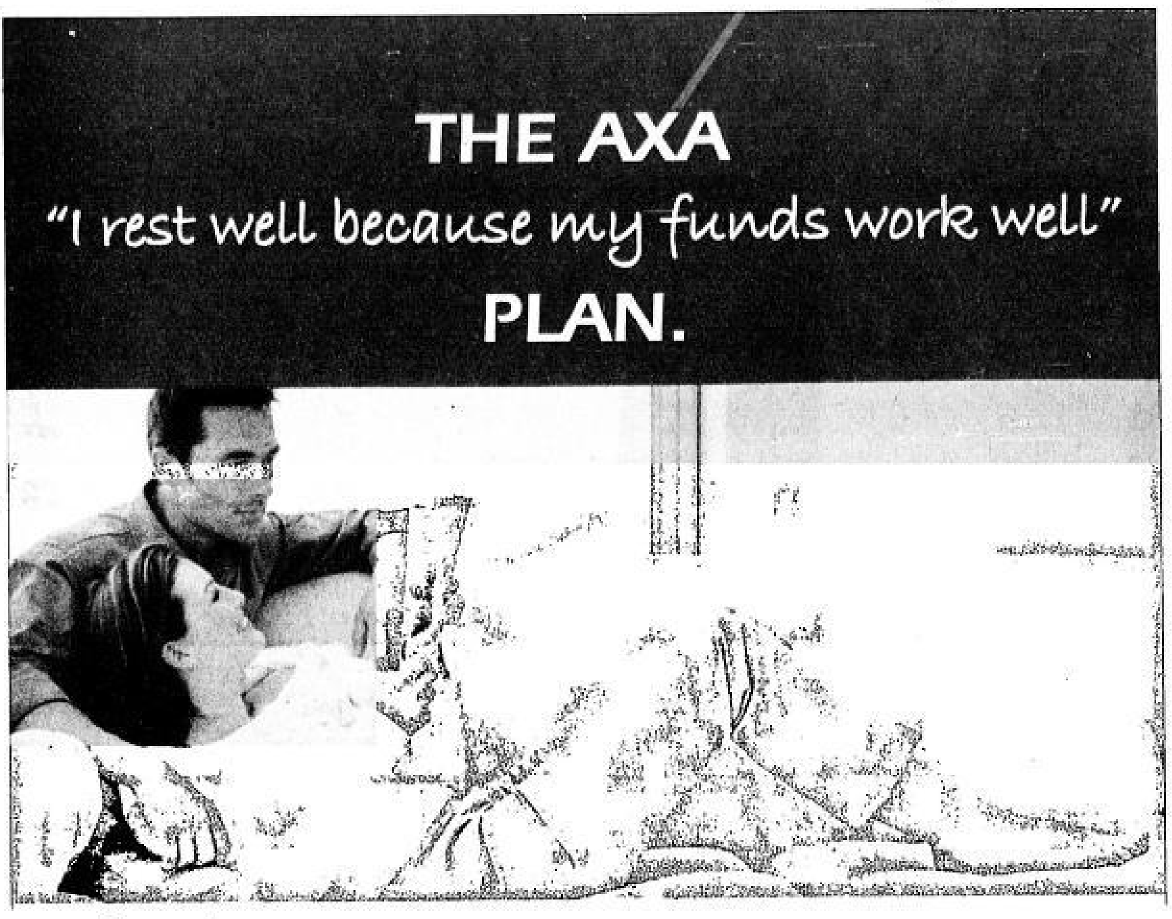
The Original Pleasures, 1995

The first edition of Pleasures is a sheer, dainty floral with a charming bouquet of white lilies, lilacs, peonies, pink roses and jasmine. Sweetness without sensuality is too girlish, so Indian sandalwood and green accents deliver a hint of seduction and airy freshness to the floral mix, making it energetic and elegant. It also features the Baie Rose, a never-before-used natural ingredient in perfumery.

Pleasures Intense, 2002

The more luscious variation of Pleasures, with a warmer, more stimulating tone to the familiar florals. The added layer of Pleasures Intense is reflected visually in the vibrant fuchsia accent to the original sheer pink of the bottle, and is the perfect combination of simplicity and vividness. The scent is more enticing and has a velvety texture - a celebration of sensuality. The additions of pink tiger lily and Maplewood give the dimension of striking voluptuousness and a new, spicier derivative of vanilla lends warmth, making the fragrance velvety rich and more femme fatale.

Estée Lauder
pleasures
intense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	15.75%	5.92%	10.51%	34.21%	78.79%

*Based on a 12-month return from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. The rates of return shown above do not guarantee future performance. The actual return may differ.
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Be Life Confident

POINSETTIA farm in Baguio City

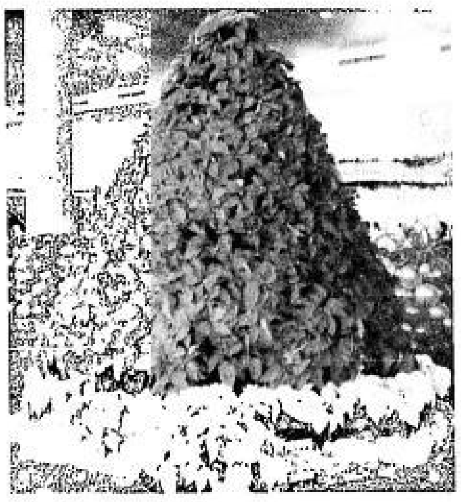
A season of seeing red

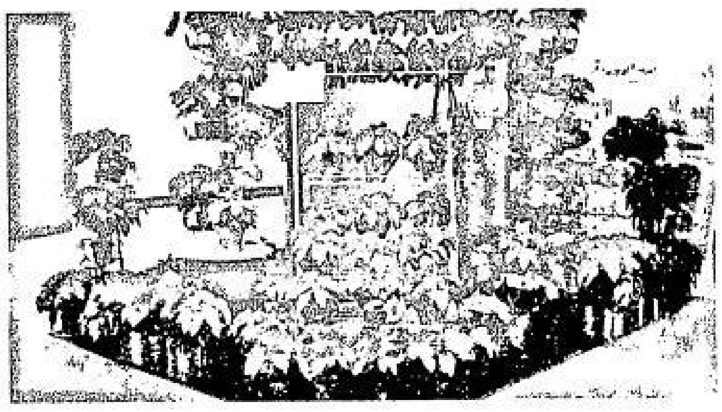
FOR THAT INSTANT, HASSLE-FREE Christmas look, nothing beats a huge, lush pot of real poinsettia. Or several small pots massed together to look like a tub of red blooms or arranged in a pyramid like a Christmas tree.

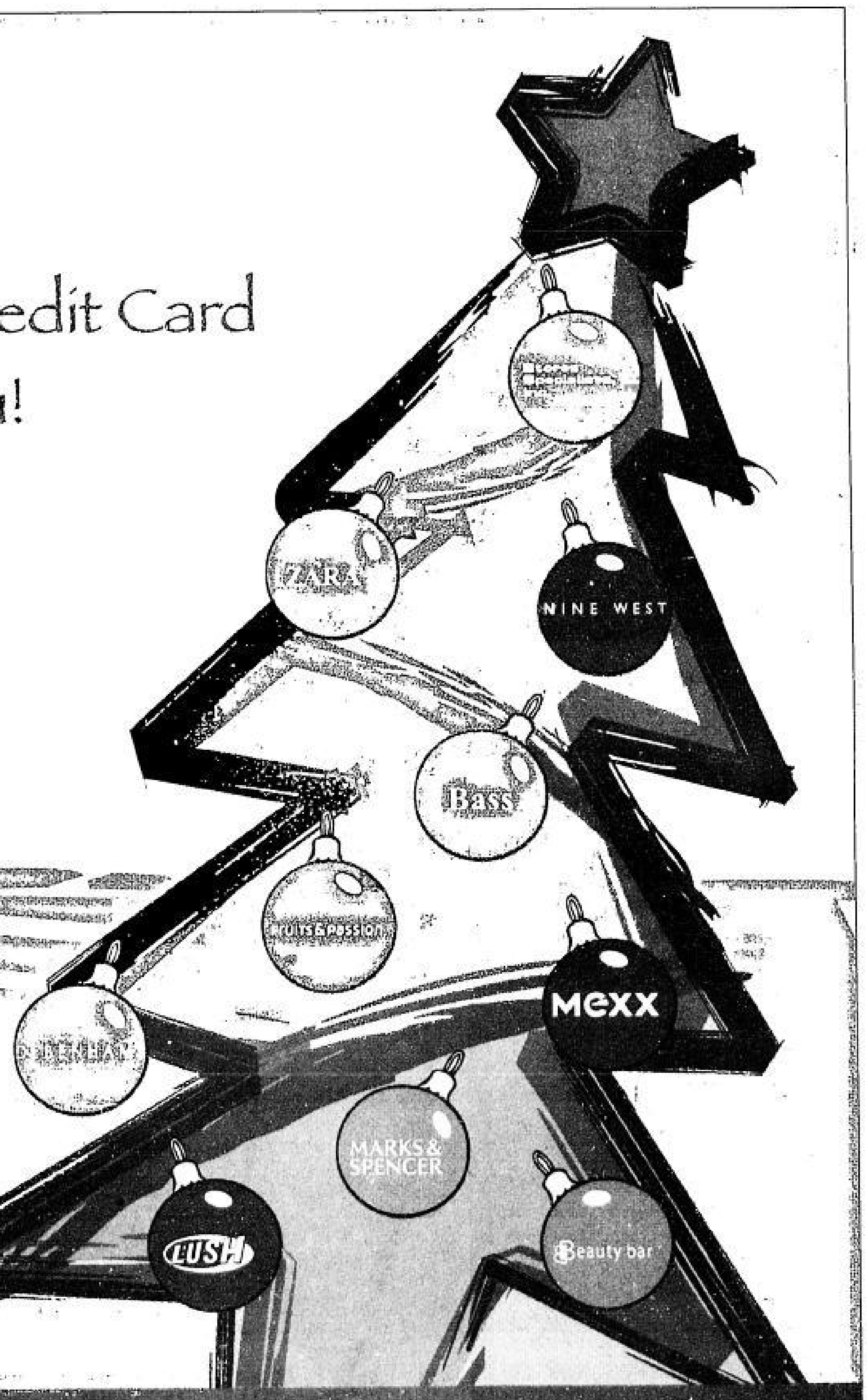
You can use a small pot as a centerpiece for your holiday dinner table or position a large one near your door to let visitors know Christmas has arrived at your home.

For the best-looking potted poinsettias, there is only one place to go—King Louie Flowers and Plants, Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center, Quezon Ave. corner Edsa, Quezon City; tel. 9294105. The store is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

King Louie has poinsettias in different colors but red remains the bestseller.


WORLD Trade Center-Noel Christmas Bazaar by GMA network


DISPLAY for a selling booth in another bazaar



Metrobank

This Christmas, Metrobank Credit Card has something in-store for you!

Get an exclusive P1,000 gift certificate for every P15,000 spent at any Stores Specialists, Inc. store.

You can use this exclusive privilege at any of the following Stores Specialists, Inc. outlets:

Anne Klein, A/X Armani Exchange, Bally, Bang & Olufsen, Bass, Beauty Bar, Bottega Veneta, Burberry, ck Calvin Klein, Calvin Klein Underwear, Debenhams, Diesel, DKNY, Dunhill, ECCO, Enzo Angiolini, Episode, Ermenegildo Zegna, Footnotes, Fruits & Passion, Furla, Gap, Gucci, Hugo Boss, Jack Spade, Jessica, Kate Spade, Kenneth Cole, Lacoste, Lacoste Accessoires, Laundry, Liz Claiborne, Lush, MakeRoom, Marc Jacobs, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Marks & Spencer, Marlboro Classics, Mexx, Michael Kors, Natori, Nine West, Polo Jeans Co., Polo Ralph Lauren, Prada, Salvatore Ferragamo, Springfield, Tod's, Tutto Moda, Zara

For inquiries, please call 8-700-700 or visit an SSI store nearest you.

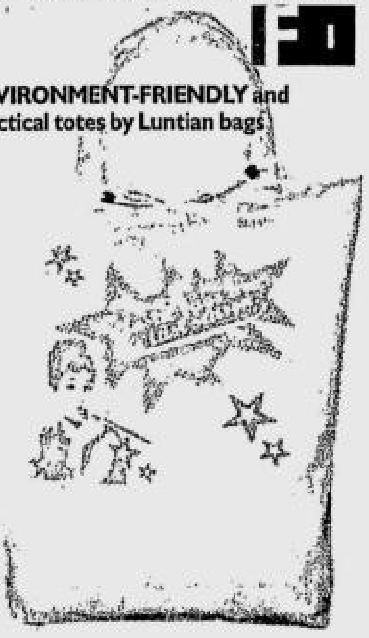
Promo is valid until January 31, 2008. Per DTI-NCR Permit No.5710, Series of 2007.

Metrobank Credit Cards

Issued by: Metrobank Card Corporation
A joint venture of Metrobank and ANZ

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE

DONATE books to kids in need.



ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY and practical totes by Luntian bags

Alternative holiday activities

ROOTS AND WINGS

Cathy Babao-Guballa

SO MUCH OF CHRISTMAS has become commercialized but let not the material trappings dampen your holiday mood or take away the true meaning of Christmas. As we prepare to remember our loved ones with gifts of appreciation, and prepare sumptuous meals in anticipation of family reunions, let us not forget that there are many others who are in need. Not only during Christmas, but each and everyday, we must strive to pay it forward. Here are a few ways to celebrate a more meaningful and hopefully, stress-free Christmas.

- Give gifts that give back.

This year, I made a conscious effort to try and choose gifts that one way or another give back. One of the nicest and most practical ones I found are Ichay Bulaong's Luntian bags (http://luntianbags.wordpress.com/). Her bags are completely sewn and printed by womenfolk from San Teodoro, Mabini, Batangas. Starting off with one *mananahi*, the livelihood program now benefits 21 families. E-mail Ichay at ibulaong@gmail.com for orders.

Another environment-friendly gift that gives back are safe, nontoxic, environmentally correct household cleaners created by a company called Messy Bessy Cleaners. Krie Reyes-Lopez and her siblings set up a project called House (Helping Ourselves Through Sustainable Enterprise) and Messy Bessy is one of the enterprises that helps disadvantaged youth. Krie says that while they are aiming for Messy Bessy to provide homes with safe and natural cleaners, they are also providing marginalized people training in manufacturing, accounting, and sales. I like their lavender linen spray and eucalyptus all-purpose scrub. E-mail messybessycleaners@gmail.com

ALTERNATIVE/ F4

Gift Certificates available at promo prices!
Pamper your skin... for less
Diamond Peel + Vitamin C Ionotherapy P700
IV Glutathione, 3 sessions P5,000
Sclerotherapy, 4 sessions Varicose and Spider Veins Removal P5,000
Hair Removal, 4 sessions Underarms or Bikini Line P7,500
ThermaFirme, 8 sessions P15,000
Until December 19, 2007
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.4749, series of 2007
QUEZON AVE 382-2222 / 0922-8081210
ROBINSONS MIDTOWN 567-1968 / 0928-2513378
GREENHILLS 722-9123 / 0922 - 8463482
BINONDO 244-6888 / 0906 - 3456111
SM FAIRVIEW 939 - 1105 / 0906 - 4765304
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Christmas Tree
in Pound or Mocha Chiffon
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Dreaming of your own *Spa Business?*
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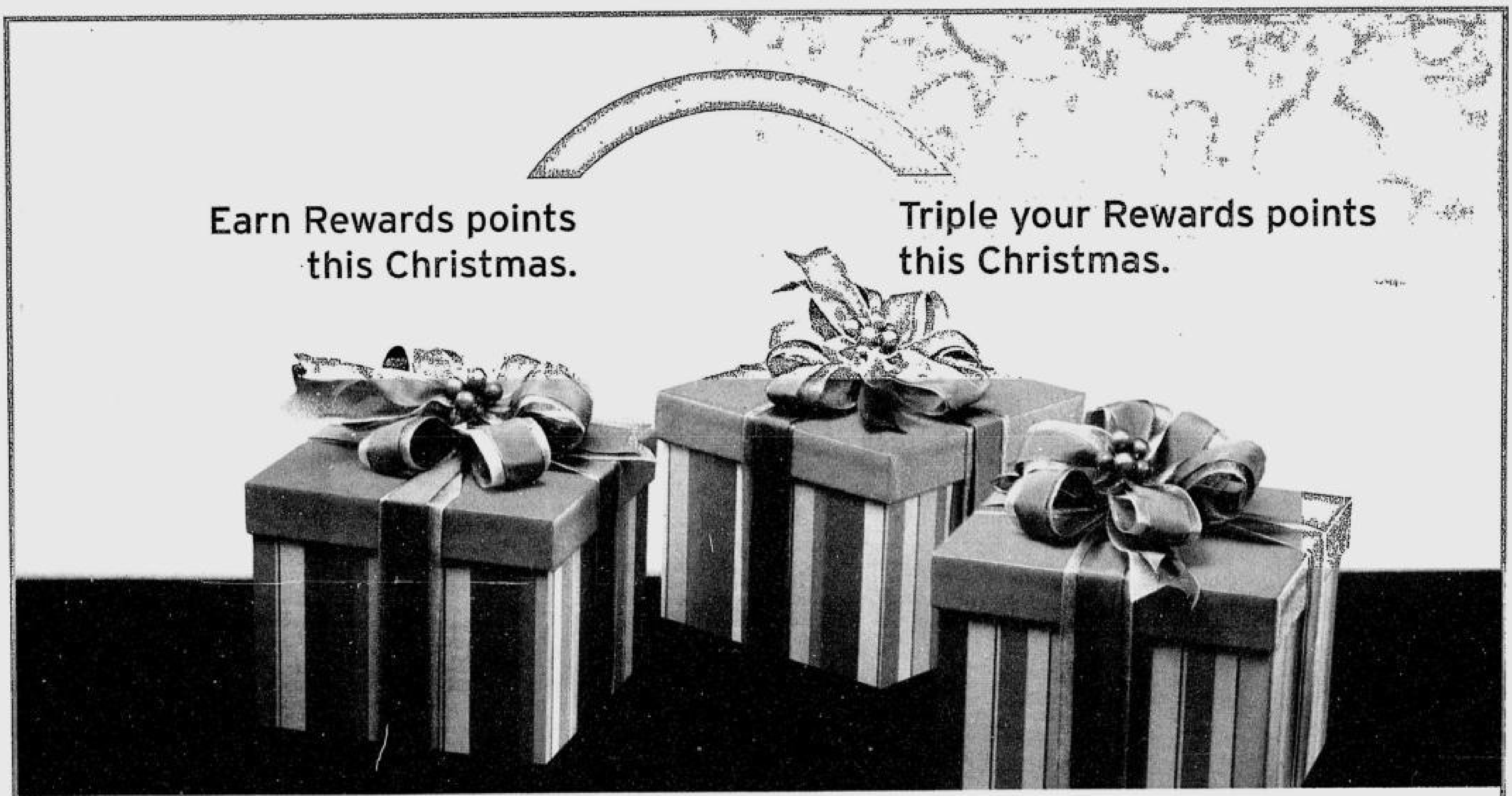

Earn Rewards points this Christmas.
Triple your Rewards points this Christmas.
Earn Triple Rewards points on your weekend purchases this Christmas season when you shop using your Citibank Credit Card consecutively on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Plus, earn Double Rewards points on all other days.
To avail, register once by texting CITI<space>16-DIGIT CREDIT CARD NUMBER to 2366.
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CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
UP TO 50% OFF The Body Shop Greenhills & Festival Mall until December 31, 2007
Also visit our **Christmas Villages** at the following malls: **Glorietta 1&4, Mall of Asia, Greenhills V Mall and Trinoma**

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Darang

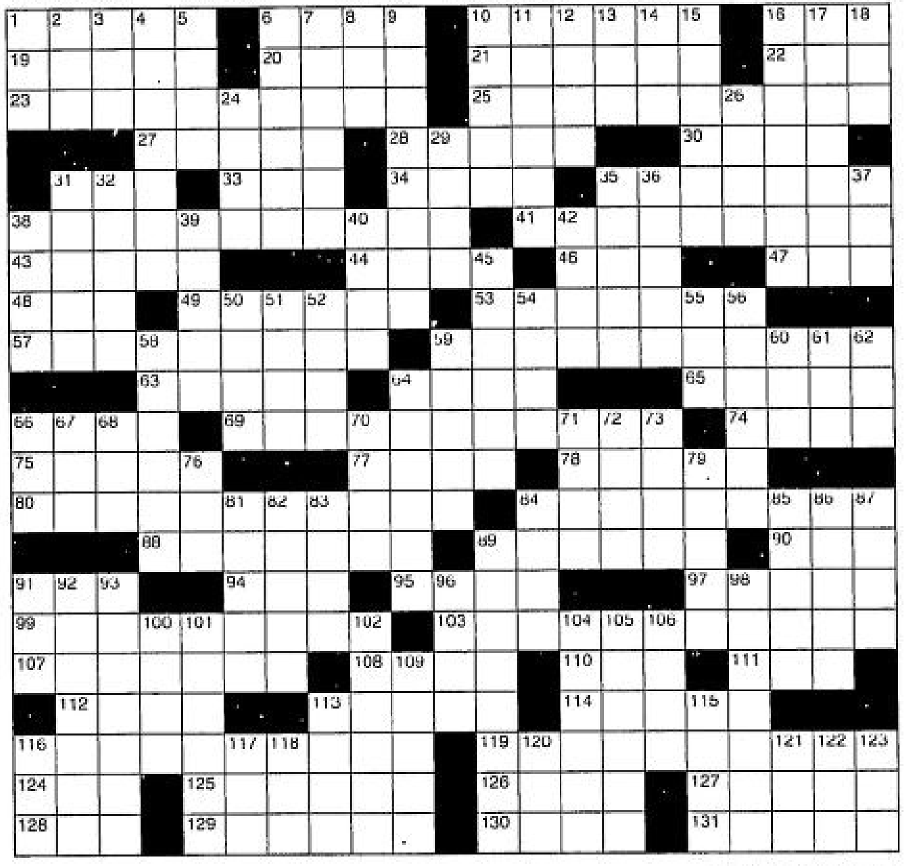
Taiwanese medical mission treats poor Pinoys

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — ONE'S CARDS

ACROSS
1 Tennis star Borg
6 Agitate
10 Brunch cocktail
16 "... man — mouse?"
19 Bone-chilling
20 Teen woe
21 Positive electrodes
22 Bedevil
23 Milk variety
25 Suit with a vest
27 Fish basket
28 Adjust slightly
30 French "to be"
31 Sgt. maj., e.g.
33 Maven
34 English peer
35 Deviating off course
38 Bed types
41 Minute Maid fruit juice brand
43 One-up
44 Feeble
46 Comedian Caesar
47 Felt-tip, e.g.
48 Afore
49 More lascivious
53 Tums rival
57 Mideastern conflict of 1967
59 Doc's group
63 Senator Hatch
64 Equal
65 "— Song Go Out of My Heart"
66 In fashion
69 1988 film about the 1919 World Series
74 Make void
75 Alcoves
77 Big name in pet food
78 Take away by force
80 Complete baseball game, usually
84 Some bikes
88 Italian seaport
89 Volcano in California
90 Little squirt
91 Sch. org.
94 Oozing stuff
95 Appointment
97 Mother-of-pearl
99 Comedian who co-starred in "To Be or Not to Be"
103 Grandma of a prince
107 Dead Sea documents
108 Israel's Barak
110 Prefix with classical
111 Spy novelist Fleming
112 Color quality
113 Harvester's bundle
114 Chronic complainer
116 Round Table leader
119 Film "pet detective"
124 TV Tarzan player Ron
125 Long, vehement speech
126 Ordinance
127 — and aahed
128 Topaz, e.g.
129 Riyadh natives
130 Clutter
131 Gnat and rat

DOWN
1 Trifecta, e.g.
2 Yiddish speaker
3 Goya's gold
4 Parachute part
5 At no time, in poetry
6 Speedsters
7 Texas wildcat
8 Rural hotel
9 Stencil user, often
10 Alma —
11 Bisected
12 He married Mindy
13 Pindar verse
14 Observe
15 "Ad astra per —" (motto of Kansas)
16 Give too much of a gratuity
17 Get
18 Adze relative
24 Taken-back car, e.g.
26 Slanted type: Abbr.
29 "It — Very Good Year"
31 "Flashdance" co-star Michael
32 Big name in nail care
35 Mineral water brand
36 Overhauled
37 Div. of a millennium
38 Antagonists
39 Arctic
40 Fancy vase
42 Luau setting
45 Krispy — (some doughnut shops)
50 "Jane —"
51 1939-45 event, briefly
52 "Darn it all!"
54 Baking spot
55 It makes MADD mad
56 Hall
58 List of court cases
59 Actress Emma
60 Stimpy's canine pal
61 Bouquet deliverer
62 — Paulo
64 Dramatized
66 Former employer of Paula Zahn
67 — polloi
68 Cyclotron bit
70 Pointer
71 — debt of gratitude
72 Java dispensers
73 Trial balloon
76 Brit's title
79 "Alive" co-star Vincent
81 Actor Bruce
82 Old Dodges
83 "Time — My Side"
84 You, quaintly
85 — Sketch (drawing toy)
86 Actress Mamie Van —
87 Suffix with mob
89 Site for selective horse breeding
91 Sleepwear, briefly
92 Of touch
93 "AWOL" or "NASA," e.g.
96 Sea shade
98 Walking stealthily
100 Hong —
101 Ovine cries
102 Violinist Menuhin
104 Marx collaborator
105 — of steel
106 Wry face
109 "— to you"
113 Food fish
115 L-Q linkup
116 Bar barrel
117 River inlet
118 Mr. Capote, to pals
120 Pool stick
121 Hesitant interjections
122 On Soc. Security
123 TV pitches



answer on page G4

A TEAM OF NURSES AND DOCTORS from Taiwan was in Manila for a medical and dental mission for the poor on the request of the Rotary Club of Chinatown Manila headed by Philip Lee as president. They treated over 1,000 people.

Philip personally thanked Dr. Liu and the Rotarians including project director Nellie King, her physician daughter Nikki and volunteer doctors Edmond Aguilar, Maricor Malitao; Samson Kaw and Gloria, Mylene Co, Rosario, Solomon Lee and Cristy, Annabel Lee, Dr. Onglingsuan and Chinatown Rotarians as interpreters.

The president of the Taiwan Root Medical Peace Corps, Dr. Liu Chi Chun, surveyed four possible venues. He went to Davao and Zambales to arrange missions sponsored by other non-government organizations.

The first mission was in Barangay Fortune Compound in Marikina. It was followed by a mission in Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City.

Dr. Liu brought four doctors, five dentists, four laboratory technicians, six pharmacists and five nurses, as well as equipment and supplies.

The following day, the team went to Zambales.

In Barangay Bahay Toro Hall in Quezon City, the team was greeted by local barangay officials and Congressman Bingbong Crisologo. The director of the political affairs division, James Chi-ping Chang, congratulated Dr. Liu and his team.

Kabisig sa Lahi

Vicky Wieneke, a founder of Kabisig sa Lahi, said 85 new feeding centers were put up recently. Unilever opened 10 modules for 300 children in Parola, Isla Puting Bato and Baseco in Tondo.

Rotary Club of Muntinlupa opened one in Creekside. Also involved are the Rotary Club of Makati and the Sigma Delta New York Chapter in the United States.

Since 2003, Kabisig has fed 10,000 kids while 10,000 parents were taught how to be self-sufficient through livelihood projects.

Splash brings cheer

Every December, Splash Foundation Inc. prepares goody bags for the 100 pediatric patients in the charity wards of the East Ave. Medical Center. The gift-giving under Splash's Hospitalization Assistance and Management Program has gone on for about eight years now.

The foundation also supported the renovation of the hospital's Pediatric Treatment Room and the Pediatric Doctor's Lounge.

Splash also brings Christmas cheer to about 300 disabled children under the rehabilitation program of the Vincentian Missionaries Social Development Foundation, Inc.

Maurice Ligot, SFI's COO and managing director, says: "This is an experience that we always keep in our heart because we see smiles on the faces of children who don't enjoy much in life because of their difficulties."

Tournament

Sixty-eight golfers joined the 2007 Golf Tournament sponsored by Pareb San Juan, Rotary Club of New Manila and Breezewoods Development Corporation at the south course of Valley Golf & Country Club. Overall winner was Nino Sinco.

Proceeds of the tournament went to projects of the Rotary of New Manila and Pareb's training program for realtors. Heading the fundraising activity were Pen Cortez and Nanett Sinco, both Pareb realtors; Peng Estanislao, president of Valley Golf; and Bombit Buencamino, president of Breezewoods Development Corp., who donated a townhouse for the raffle.

UST Seminary reunion

Priest-on-leave Gov. Eduardo "Among Ed" Panlilio of Pampanga will grace the 74th alumni homecoming of the University of Santo Tomas Alumni Priests Association (ALPA) on Jan. 22 and 23, 2008 at the UST Central Seminary in España, Manila.

Along with Among Ed, Bishop John Baptist Lee Keh-Mien of Hsinchu, Taiwan will discuss the two-fold mission of UST in time for the much-anticipated quadricentennial celebration in 2011 of Asia's oldest university.

THE 2007 Gold Tournament jointly spo
Development Corp. took place last No
winner was Nino Sinco (second from ri
Estanislao, president of Valley Gold and

The goal is for UST to become the center of ecclesiastical sciences in Asia and further promote its advocacy for honesty among its students and alumni. Thus, the homecoming's theme: "Thomasian Priests: Men of Ecclesiastical Learning, Models of Moral Integrity."

Hosts for next year's homecoming are members of Batch 1983 led by Fr. Victor Bendico of the Archdiocese of Capiz.

UST Paskuhan

UST will hold Paskuhan 2007 with the theme, "Bagong Pananaw: Pasko!," on Dec. 19 at the UST Grandstand.

The annual Paskuhan is the Christmas celebration of the Pontifical University. It starts at 4 p.m. with the parade of students to the UST Grandstand, followed by the Panunuluyan, which depicts Mary and Joseph's search for an inn on Christmas night.

At 5:30 p.m., a High Mass will be celebrated by the Dominican community led by UST Rector Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, O.P.

The offertory collection will go to the community outreach projects of the UST Office of Community Development. The Mass will be followed by

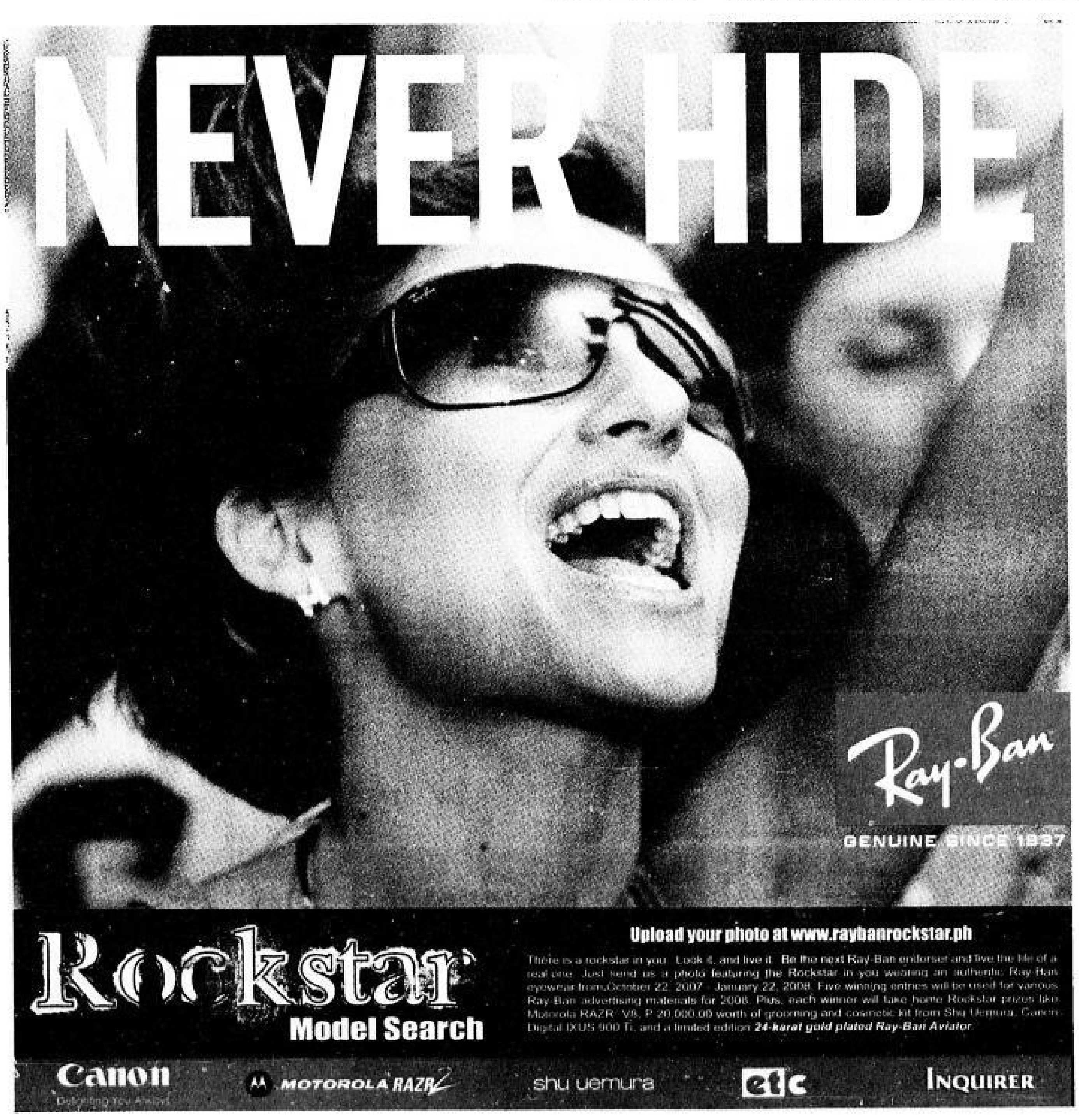
Stress-free shopping

THE LAST-MINUTE SHOPPER THIS Christmas will appreciate unique handmade and hand-painted products in ceramics and wax available at crowd-free venues.

Doc's Candles found at most Metro Manila SM and Robinson's Department Store outlets offers a substantial collection of Christmas designs that include square solid candles at P299 (small), P349 (medium), P399 (large) or P1,050 for the set with a wax base. Mini candle designs at P99 to the more pricey wax lanterns (P1,999) are good for any season. Designs are by Dr. Marichu Liwag. To avoid the crowds and get candles at a discount, go to their factory at KM 75, National Highway, Barangay Inosluban, 4217 Lipa City, Batangas. Call (6343)3126131 for directions.

Potter and ceramic artist Lanelle Abueva's Seconds Shop of export overruns showcases discounted home accessories at Crescent Moon, Antipolo (call 6305854 or 09175232356 for directions). A bonus that comes with the trip is the restaurant that serves delicious lunch (P300) and dinner (P400) and homemade *suman*. Lanelle has items at the main shop inside the restaurant where prices range from P165 for assorted bowls, a colorful ceramic fruit basket that can double up as flower vase for P1,500, to her trademark wash basins at P4,000.

Closer to the city but nonetheless crowd-free is Emma Reyes Pante's Color Me Mine ceramic studio at the 5/L, Edsa Shangri-La Mall. Ceramic Christmas goodies include bells (P200), angels (P250), hanging or free standing mini Santa Claus figures (P300) and various Ch
trees (P1,800). Good for an
sion is the angel wings candle
(P350), votive candle holder
and old-fashioned can
(P1,500). Color Me Mine, fr
of a US-based company, has br
at Greenbelt-3 in Makati and
cio High St. at the Fort both
Hobbes, but the largest inve
still at Shangri-La. The best co
however, apart from the peac
mosphere of the studio is th
can paint personalized items
strains of classical musi
6870801.



Upload your photo at www.raybanrockstar.ph

There is a rockstar in you. Look it, and live it. Be the next Ray-Ban endorser and live the life of a real one. Just send us a photo featuring the Rockstar in you wearing an authentic Ray-Ban eyewear from October 22, 2007 - January 22, 2008. Five winning entries will be used for various Ray-Ban advertising materials for 2008. Plus, each winner will take home Rockstar prizes like Motorola RAZR V8, P 20,000.00 worth of grooming and cosmetic kit from Shu Uemura, Canon Digital IXUS 900 Ti, and a limited edition ***24-karat gold plated Ray-Ban Aviator.***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Woods Development Corp.
PAREB San Juan
New
Golf Tournament
2007

nsored by Pareb San Juan, Rotary Club of New Manila & Breezewoods
v. 9 at the South Course of Valley Golf & Country Club. Overall Lowest Net
ght) with (from left) Pen Cortez, Nanett SInco (both Pareb realtors), Peng
Bombit Buencamino, president of Breezewoods Development Corp.

the lighting of the giant Christmas tree and the traditional fireworks display. More than 100 prizes will be raffled off.

CD on forgiveness

Fr. Bob McConaghy has been working with the mayor of Arteche town in Samar to bring medicines to the poor. To support the project, Fr. Bob sells his CD on forgiveness for P300 at the Greenbelt Chapel. For more info, contact Dennis at tel. 8920160-61 or e-mail merkmediainc@gmail.com

The CD can teach you to get rid of hatred, grudges, failure and anger. I learned about Fr. Bob through my friend Gina Camus, who met him when she attended a recollection at the Marello House.

Lifeline thoughts

In Fr. Bob's poster are lifeliners from people he worked with or who attended his retreats: "If everything seems falling in on you, and you have come to the end of your rope and there is nothing left to hold on to, let go and let God bring you back to solid ground through these short and simple reflections of Fr. Bob. Savor the delicacy of God's love in this breathtaking collection of talks." (Caesar Liza; Workers of Christ).

Fr. Bob says Christmas is the best gift we can have because Christ was born. Jesus, after all, is our last lifeline.

St. Expeditus program

The Society of St. Expeditus is presenting for the second year "San Expedito, ang Santong Madaling Lapitan" at 7 p.m. today over Radio Veritas, 846 AM band.

The response during the first year was tremendous, especially with the healing on the air by Fr. Diwane Cacao.

Tonight, the sharer is Prof. Cely Romero of the University of Perpetual Help.

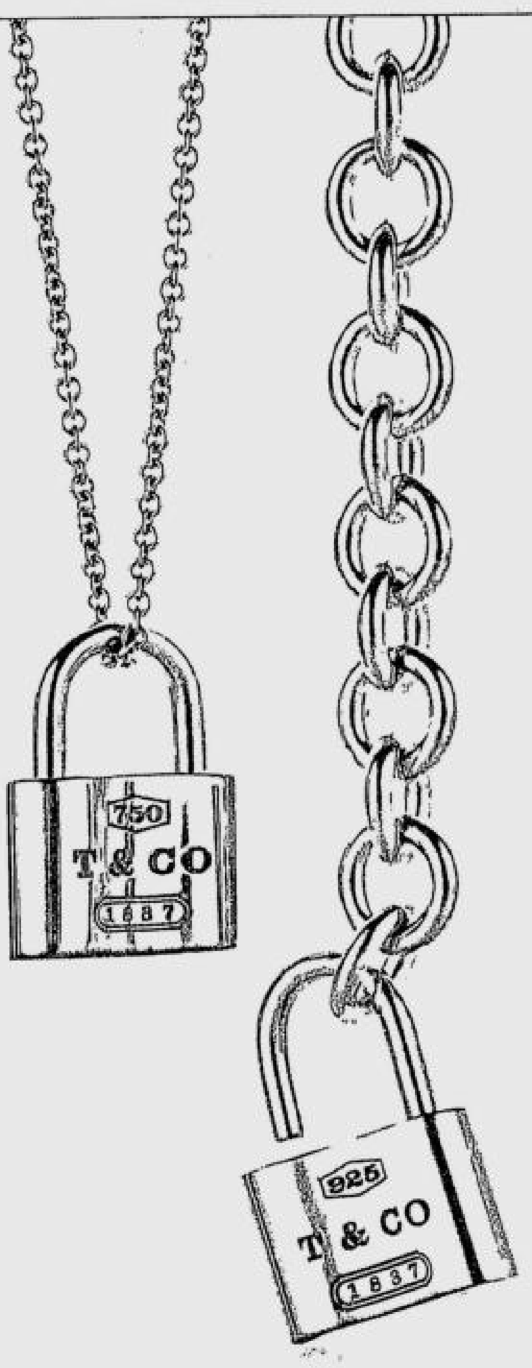
She said she prayed to St. Expeditus to raise money for the tuition of her seminarian son, a second year theology student at Tahanan ng Mabuting Pastol.

She prayed the nine-day novena in one sitting. God provided through the intercession of St. Expeditus.

To help Peter Rey Romero, please text Cely at 0916-4609147. Thank you for your kindness.

Bonifacio Sison, 70 years old, of Ilocos Norte, is a poor bachelor with no family.

He is very sick and needs help to get treatment. Text him at 0927-5560868. God bless you all for helping.



TIFFANY & CO.

Tiffany 1837™ lock pendant and bracelet in eighteen karat gold and sterling silver.

Rustan's

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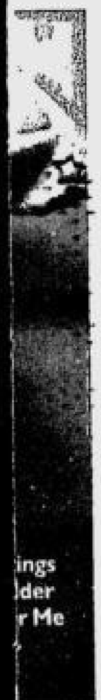

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Break Bread with Julie's

In this season of joy and celebration, breaking bread with family and friends is a symbol of sharing and of renewing the bonds that tie us together. What better way to share the joy of Christmas than with a table full of life's bounties and delicious Julie's Sliced Bread.

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'Di Mapigilan ang Sarap!

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Alternative holiday activities

From page F1

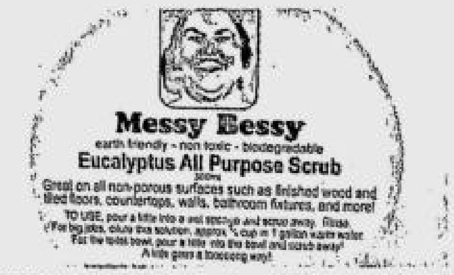
or call 0917-8303003 for inquiries.

- Pack Christmas care packages instead of giving money.

For the last few years now, I decided that I wasn't going to give money anymore to our usual service providers—postman, garbage collectors, and every imaginable bill collector you can think of during Christmas. Instead, my children and I, together with our househelp will put together a Christmas care package composed of noodles, sardines, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush for the adults; and one with cookies, candies and some toiletries for the children who ring our doorbell or knock on our car windows. In doing so, you can be assured that the goods will be for their personal consumption and the money you have spent does not go to waste.

- Sing or play Christmas carols.

Every morning now, for the last week or so, my children wake up to the sound of Christmas music. In the evenings, we play the softer, slower ones that lull us to sleep while the mornings are reserved for the hipper Christmas carols (I just love Babyface's version of "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer"). Nothing says "holiday season" like Christmas carols and so I make sure that I have them playing whenever possible. Since I discovered this wonderful website imeem.com the music on my laptop has been on, nonstop.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- Clean out your closets and donate your children's old toys and books.

This holiday season, teach your children the true spirit of giving by asking them to choose one of their new or still in good condition toys to give to a child in need. This year, Migi's Corner, a foundation we set up in memory of my son, is doing a toy drive for the children of Barangay Rio Hondo in Zambonga. In the last typhoon, several towns were hit by giant waves and the effect was tsunami-like. If you would like to bring cheer to these children who have lost not only property but in some cases, family members, as well, please donate your old books and in good condition toys. E-mail migiscorner@gmail.com or call 0910-7446469

WATCH inspiring Christmas movies.

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BABYFACE'S "Rudolph" will get your Christmas spirit rocking.

- Volunteer your time and energy.

Give a little of yourself this holiday season, and helping others is always a great way to spread cheer and love. Take time out of your busy holiday schedule to volunteer at a hospital ward, an orphanage, a women's shelter or an old folk's home. Bring them a little something or, at the very least, bring them your smile and your companionship.

- Spend time together as a family and watch uplifting Christmas-themed movies.

My personal favorite is the 1946 Frank Capra classic, "It's a Wonderful Life" starring James Stewart who plays the role of a man about to commit suicide during the holidays (statistically, the highest suicide rates unfortunately always occur around the holidays) because he's financially ruined. An angel stops him in his tracks by showing him what life would be like if he'd never existed. A beautiful movie that celebrates the resiliency of man and the beauty of life.

- Shop in comfort.

I have become my mother when it comes to shopping—scouring the shops in my jeans, tees and hoodie. My greatest find this season has given me so much comfort while walking around. The Merrell Women's Relay Stretch is awesome in the support that it provides. When I tried to find out what made it different, I discovered that it was because of the Q-Form™ technology that compensates for a woman's pronounced "Q angle" (the angle between hip and knee) to alleviate discomfort. This also reduces the wear and tear of shoes, enabling them to last longer.

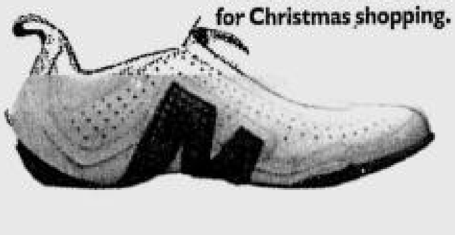
- Reconnect with old friends but don't stress yourself out trying to get-together with everyone.

Parties are all over town and suddenly old friends whom we haven't seen the rest of the year pop up from out of nowhere wanting to get together. Christmas is a wonderful time to rekindle and renew ties but don't stress yourself out and in the process get yourself sick. Prioritize the events you really must say yes to.

- Get your kids involved in all the preparations.

A child was the reason for this wonderful season that the whole Christian world celebrates. Christmas to my mind will always be magical in a child's eyes. Involve your kids in as many activities as they are able to—wrapping the gifts, trimming the tree, doing charity or volunteer work, cooking the meals. It is in the making of these memories together as one family that makes the Christmas season all the more meaningful.

E-mail the author at cathybabao@gmail.com



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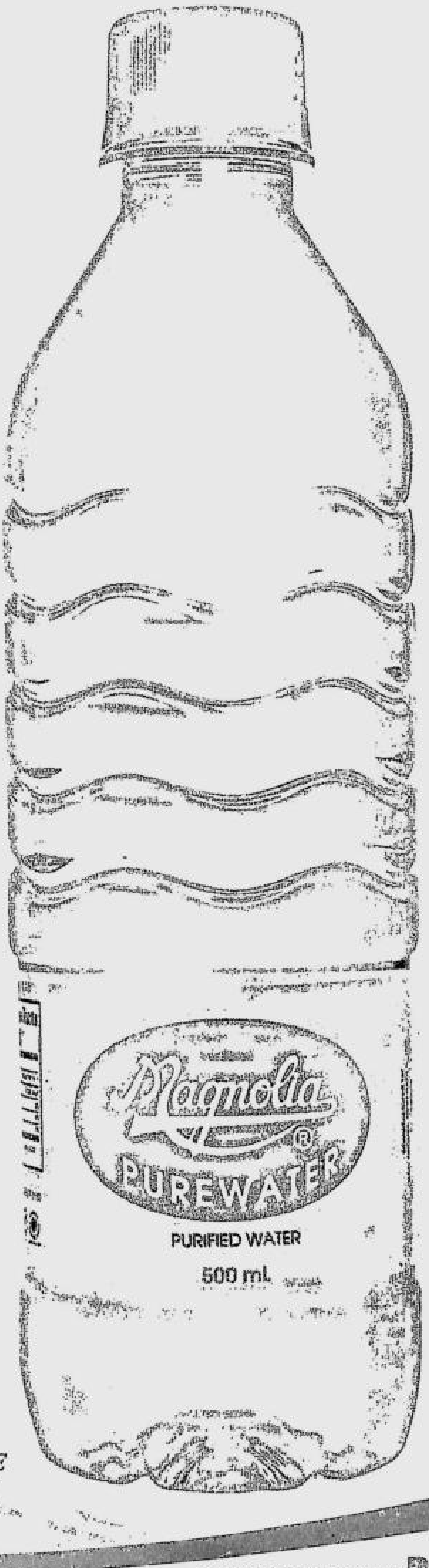

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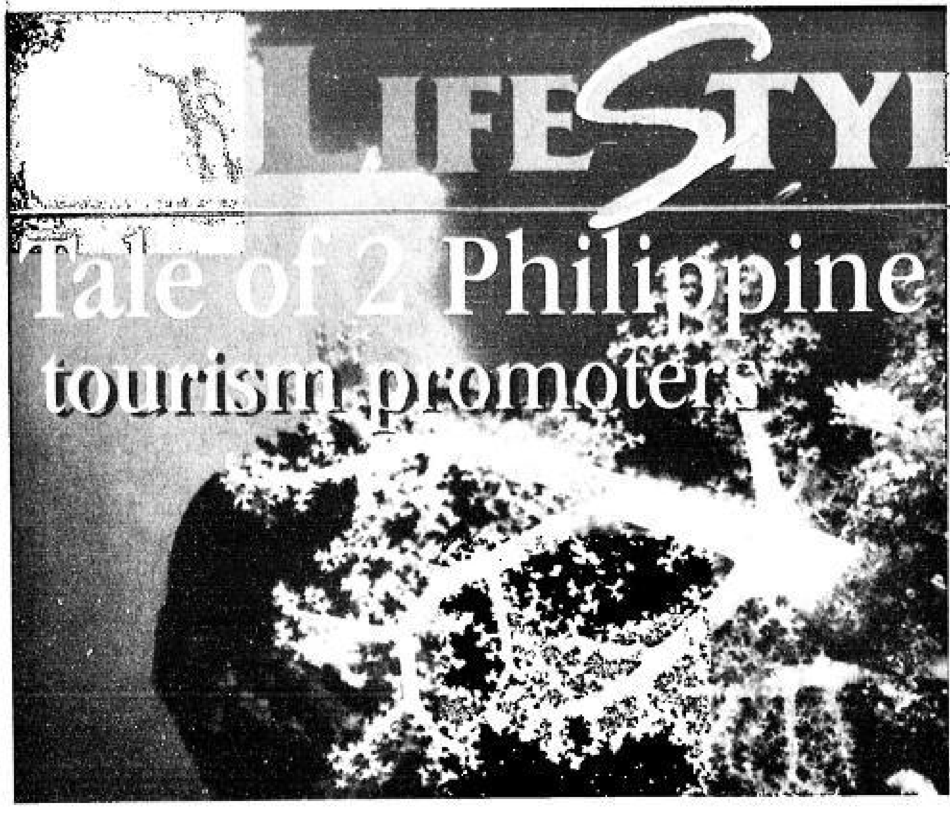

Tale of 2 Philippine tourism promoters

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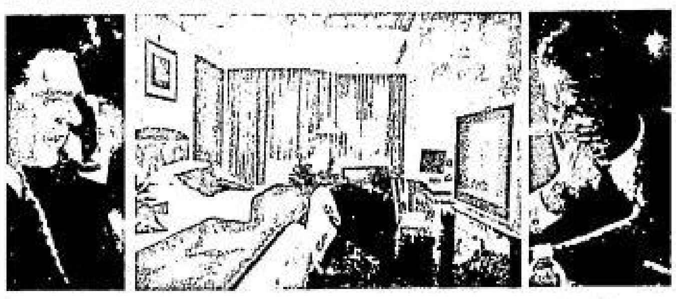

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Lynn Funkhouser and Bernie Encarnacion represent two facets of the very creative tourism drive in North America

Text and photos by Alex Y. Vergara

THEIR BACKGROUNDS, INTERESTS AND even skin colors couldn't have been more different, but Lynn Funkhouser and Bernie Encarnacion share a common passion for the Philippines, its people and its "wealth of wonders."

This didn't escape the attention of Vernie Velarde-Morales, one of the country's tourism directors in the United States and Canada, who promptly appealed to them to help the Philippines in its efforts to attract more tourists.

Funkhouser and Encarnacion gladly heeded her invitation and are now part of the Department of Tourism's growing army of formal as well as informal promo partners in North America.

Just like any typical Filipino-American, Encarnacion knew next to nothing about the country's tourist attractions since she left it for the US as a teenager. Her last visit before being reintroduced to it in 2005 was in 1993.

"I've been to Europe, Mexico and have gone on several cruises," she said. "But the only places I had been to in the Philippines prior to 2005 were Manila, Bulacan and Batangas."

Amazing Vacations

When she and her husband decided to visit the Philippines two years ago with their kids, Encarnacion couldn't imagine herself spending the entire time in the hubby's hometown in Batangas. This time she did it the American way by carefully planning the family vacation to include trips to Cebu and Bohol. What she saw blew her away.

"I was amazed that the Philippines has such attractions," she gushed. "The resorts are world-class and the beaches are clearer and more beautiful than those in Mexico. The fish even mistook my nail polish for marshmallows!"

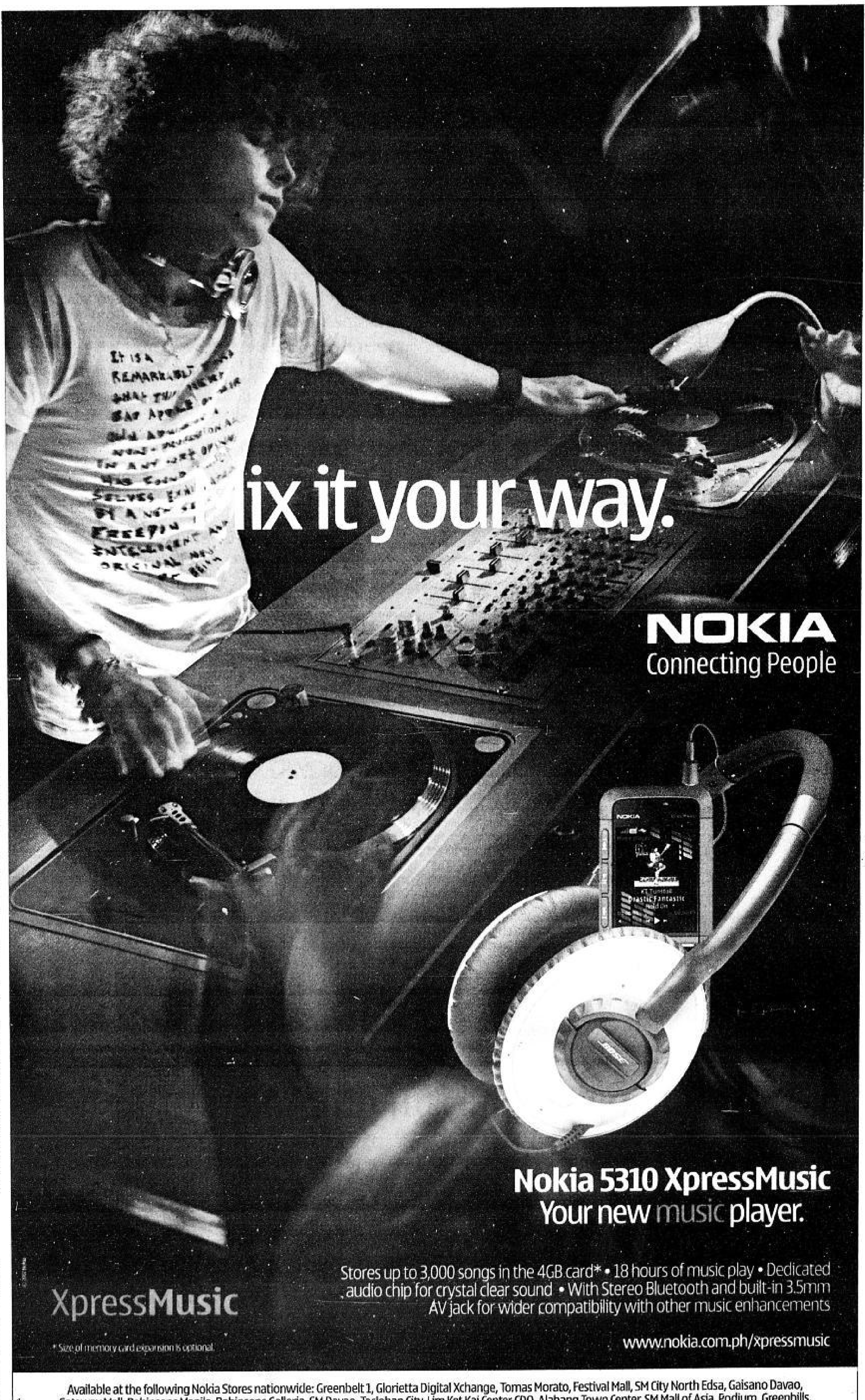
She later ventured farther to Palawan and Boracay, and was equally delighted at what awaited her. She also took note of the fact that as a destination, the Philippines offers one of the most diverse shopping, dining and recreational options.

After working for one of Chicago's leading hospitals for almost 20 years, Encarnacion shifted careers. Since she loves to travel and has seen for herself what the Philippines can offer, she set her sights on becoming a tour operator.

"Besides, I wanted to spend more time

TALE OF/ G2

LYNN Funkhouser



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MEMBERS of the Novo Ecijano Dance Troupe perform an Igorot dance at Navy Pier.

VERNIE Velarde-Morales and Junjun Jorda-Apo (second and fifth from left) with DOT's Katrina Campana, Ultimate Dive's Nick and Laura Scarborough, DOT's Nora Bautista and Amazing Vacations' Bernie Encarnacion

Filipino tourists from North America have become more demanding and global in taste. They can hie off to Vietnam and Thailand but skip the Philippines.

The mainstreaming of the 'balikbayan'

FOR DECADES NOW, Filipinos based in the United States have comprised the bulk of tourists visiting the Philippines from North America. Although the equation isn't going to drastically change anytime soon, their demands and expectations of their homecoming are now no different from those of "mainstream" American and Canadian tourists.

Officials of the Philippine Department of Tourism took note of this development in a recent two-day travel expo in Chicago's Navy Pier. Organized by NBC5 and presented by AAA, the consumer show was open to the American public for free.

Through the efforts of DOT's office in Chicago, the Philippines earned the distinction of being the expo's featured destination in Southeast Asia. And despite height restrictions and a modest budget, the Philippine booth won third place over a fairly diverse field.

Through the years, the DOT has come up with ways to entice Filipino-Americans and their friends to visit and revisit the country. Last year alone, an estimated 587,000 visitors came from the United States (including Guam), eclipsing even Korea as the leading source of dollar-spending tourists.

And unlike Koreans, who reportedly make it a point to patronize Korean-owned businesses in the Philippines, North American tourists aren't influenced by "patriotic" affiliations.

"They simply spend and they spend big," said Junjun Jorda-Apo, DOT's Team North America head. "If a typical tourist spends $90 per day, a typical North American, regardless of ethnicity, spends an average of $110."

(Interestingly, Team North America's annual promo budget of P65 million pales in comparison with Team Korea's, which reportedly gets an annual promo budget of close to P150 million.)

Of the 587,000 visitors, a number making up 22 percent of total tourist arrivals in 2006, Jorda-Apo estimated that nearly 300,000 were Filipino-Americans. Despite the dollar's steady decline, the North American market is expected to post a modest growth by year's end.

"Travel advisories and limited promo budgets are things we've learned to deal with," said Jorda-Apo. "Through it all, the market has yet to dip. In fact, it continues to grow."

A DOT staffer provides useful information to a potential tourist.

MEMBERS of the Filipino dance group Novo Ecijano show Chicagoans how it's done in the islands.

Sophisticated

Oddly enough, the age-old assumption that Filipino-Americans will always come home to visit no matter what no longer holds. In short, they've become as sophisticated and as demanding as the next tourist.

This development is particularly true among second and third-generation Filipino-Americans (whether mixed race or not), whose list of holiday options has gotten longer by the year. To a certain extent, their parents and grandparents are also not impervious to the lures of more accessible and supposedly cheaper vacation hotspots in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

"Not a few Filipino-Americans, particularly those belonging to succeeding generations, want to be viewed as part of the mainstream," said Vernie Velarde-Morales, DOT's tourism director of USA and Canada (Midwest region). "Since they belong to the highest income-earning group among Asian-Americans, they now have the means to travel to destinations other than the Philippines."

And whereas Filipino-Americans were content to stay with relatives, a growing number now prefer to stay in hotels and resorts whenever they visit the country.

"Filipino-Americans have now become seasoned travelers and they expect only the best," Velarde-Morales said. "Unfortunately, a good number of them haven't visited the Philippines in decades. Their limited knowledge of the country is usually based on what they remember of their hometowns."

Distance and security

To complicate matters, the country is bogged down by a perennial image problem in America, fuelled by actual socio-political turmoils in the Philippines and partly by misconceptions and ignorance of Filipino-Americans themselves.

Distance remains a hurdle, but not a major one since not a few Filipino-Americans travel to various parts of Asia, including China, Thailand and Vietnam, but deliberately skip the Philippines.

"That's why our efforts are also geared at luring them back and showing them other places," said Velarde-Morales. "Once they discover for themselves that there are alternative destinations to go to, chances are they come back this time with friends and other relatives."

Security is a recurrent concern among travelers. Add to this a shortage of five-star hotels and resorts to cater to a steady increase in tourist arrivals. Thankfully, the private sector has begun to actively respond to this development.

Backbone

Despite such odds, the North American market, especially the top three states composed of California, Hawaii and Illinois, is simply too lucrative to give up without a fight.

If anything, these developments, particularly the rise of the demanding Filipino-American traveler, have led DOT officials to tap into a wellspring of "creative juices" to bring in tourists, especially the free-spending variety.

FILIPINO-AMERICAN singing group Hapag

NBC5, one of America's most influential networks, hosts its second travel expo for consumers in Chicago.

FIL-AM kids and their mentors play folk songs from their ancestors' homeland.

"Filipino-Americans remain the backbone of this market," said Jorda-Apo. "But at the same time, we've identified areas like diving where we can attract visitors, regardless of background, that give us the highest yield."

DOT is coming up with several measures to cope with the challenges such as tapping influential endorsers (*see related story*) and the Internet to reintroduce the country's "wealth of wonders" to the moneyed group.

A large part of its efforts goes into identifying receptive travel agents and tour operators in the US (particularly but not limited to Filipino-Americans) and flying them for free to the Philippines for familiarization trips to top travel destinations.

At the same time, DOT, through the assistance of an on-line company called Travel Academy, is actively expanding the number of its US-based promoters by inviting potential agents to take on-line courses designed to turn them into Philippine "specialists."

Philippine promoters

The country's tourism attaches in the US screen successful examinees on how serious and capable they are to market the Philippines before they're sent here on an all-expense paid trip.

Of the first batch of 700 enrollees, close to 400 people have passed the tests. An initial batch consisting of 50 would-be agents have already visited the country. Surprisingly, majority of them are mainstream Americans.

Tourists to the Philippines from North America (again, regardless of ethnicity) can log on to www.experiencephilippines.com and get a chance to win iconic Filipino products in monthly raffle draws. Monthly winners are still eligible to join the grand draw. Up for grabs is a condo unit at St. Francis Square at the Ortigas Center.

Despite the Internet's awesome reach, however, nothing can ever take the place of the so-called personal touch in Velarde-Morales' book.

The indefatigable tourism attaché, who, together with husband Bob, has taken her job of promoting the Philippines with a near-religious zeal, never fails to seek out and identify potential "partners," particularly in the huge and often fractured Filipino-American community, wherever she goes.

"Our thrust is more focused than before," she said, "but we're not discounting the potential of everybody, especially Filipino-Americans, to be effective ambassadors of tourism."

At every opportunity, she tries to personally appeal to them to consider visiting the country and to spread the word that it's a great place to visit

Their idea of the good life may have gone up several notches, but in the end no one can be more effective and convincing in promoting the Philippines in the US than Filipino-Americans themselves.

Alex Y. Vergara

Tale of 2 Philippine tourism promoters

From page G1

with my kids," she said. "But the move was such a drastic one that neither me nor my husband was sure if it would work out."

Whatever doubts Encarnacion had were soon put to rest when she met Velarde-Morales, who encouraged her to give it a try. It was no empty support, as the tourism director provided her with the necessary materials, including contacts in the Philippines, to make it work. And, thus, her very own tour company, Amazing Vacations, was born.

As one of its managing partners, Encarnacion and three other Filipino-Americans attend to the needs of tourists to the Philippines. A number of colleagues also plan holidays to other destinations, but tours to the Philippines generate the lion's share of bookings.

Like Encarnacion before, Filipino-Americans and their friends couldn't believe their eyes every time they come home to the US from a holiday in the islands. The once-reluctant travel executive is only too happy to be of service to them.

"Business is booming," she said. "That and the fact that I'm proud to promote the land of my birth to potential as well as returning tourists have made the big career switch worth it."

Diving into the Philippines

Funkhouser is a different case altogether. The former flight attendant has been diving since 1967 before stumbling on the Philippines in 1976 after joining a medical mission in Guam with Filipino doctors.

"Diving is my 'drug' of choice," she said. "It's like an addiction."

Soon enough, she found herself, one of only four women, on board a Philippine navy destroyer as it cruised off the shores of what are considered today as rebel hotspots: Jolo, Basilan and Zamboanga.

"Women didn't swim let alone dive back then in the Philippines," she said. "Since I was most of the time the only woman in the group (and a Caucasian at that!), I was probably considered semi-normal."

It was love at first sight for Funkhouser, who, years before discovering the Philippines, had already scoured almost the entire globe in search of the best dive sights. She has yet to find a place on earth as rich and as diverse as the country's treasure trove of marine life.

She has been a yearly visitor since, staying two to six months at a time exploring the waters of Anilao, Tubbataha, Palawan and most recently Apo Island. In the course of her trips to the Philippines, she has brought with her countless divers and marine enthusiasts from the US.

"With the help of friendly dive masters, I can easily spot five to 10 new marine critters in every dive," said Funkhouser, who eventually shifted to photography. "You're lucky to find one new specie in a week of diving in the Caribbean."

Her expertise came in handy when people at the Chicago's Shedd Aquarium were looking for a marine sanctuary to feature as a permanent exhibit in the late 1990s.

As a Shedd volunteer and vocal marine environmentalist, Funkhouser was asked to recommend the best sight there was on earth that doubled as a success story on environmental awareness and sustainable development.

She promptly pointed and later accompanied them to Apo Island, a tinny-weenie dot off the coast of Dumaguete.

The Shedd people were so convinced with what they saw that they eventually went on to build the exhibit: a $49-million permanent attraction inspired by facets of the Philippines' awesome marine resources. It also houses a number of Funkhouser's underwater photographs.

It reportedly took its builders eight years to plan and make, as it involved digging 15,000 sq ft of earth to simulate as best it can actual conditions.

As for Funkhouser, she has no plans to turn her back from her second home anytime soon. "I love the Filipino people and I get that love back," she declared. "Everybody loves Filipinos."

Magical underwater Christmas

FROM THE COLORFUL MASQUERADE TO the delightful Christmas Village, Shangri-La Plaza Mall outdoes its previous seasons with this year's magical underwater theme. "This holiday season, we want people to be aware about how beautiful our seas are and that we have a responsibility to take care of it and preserve its beauty," explains Shangri-La Plaza marketing manager Marline Concio Dualan.

Witness the mall's interiors come alive with a fanciful holiday scene featuring eye-catching, larger-than-life creations of fishes and marine life that come in vivid hues of blue, pearl, gold and jewel tones. Santa Claus also gets a break as Neptunea takes over to spread holiday warmth and cheer.

As in years past, Shang celebrates Christmas with orchestra, song, dance and theater productions.

Champion singer Jed Madela proves that he is indeed the Voice of Christmas as he croons renditions of the best-loved Yuletide songs from his first ever Christmas album on Dec. 16, 6 p.m.

The Philippine Montessori Music Ensemble presents "Angels at Play" on Dec. 17 while the La Salle Grade School paints the "Colors of Christmas" on Dec. 18, 6 p.m. followed by the La Salle Kundirana's Kundirana in "Joy" at 7 p.m. Stick around for the "Echoes of Christmas" brought to you by St. Theresa's College on Dec. 19, 5 p.m. Let the Opera Babies astound you with their singing at 7 p.m.

"A Christmas Serenade" from the Philippine Prince of Operatic Pop Jonathan Badon will be staged on Dec. 20, 7 p.m.

Watch prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde and Ballet Manila in "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 21, 7 p.m.

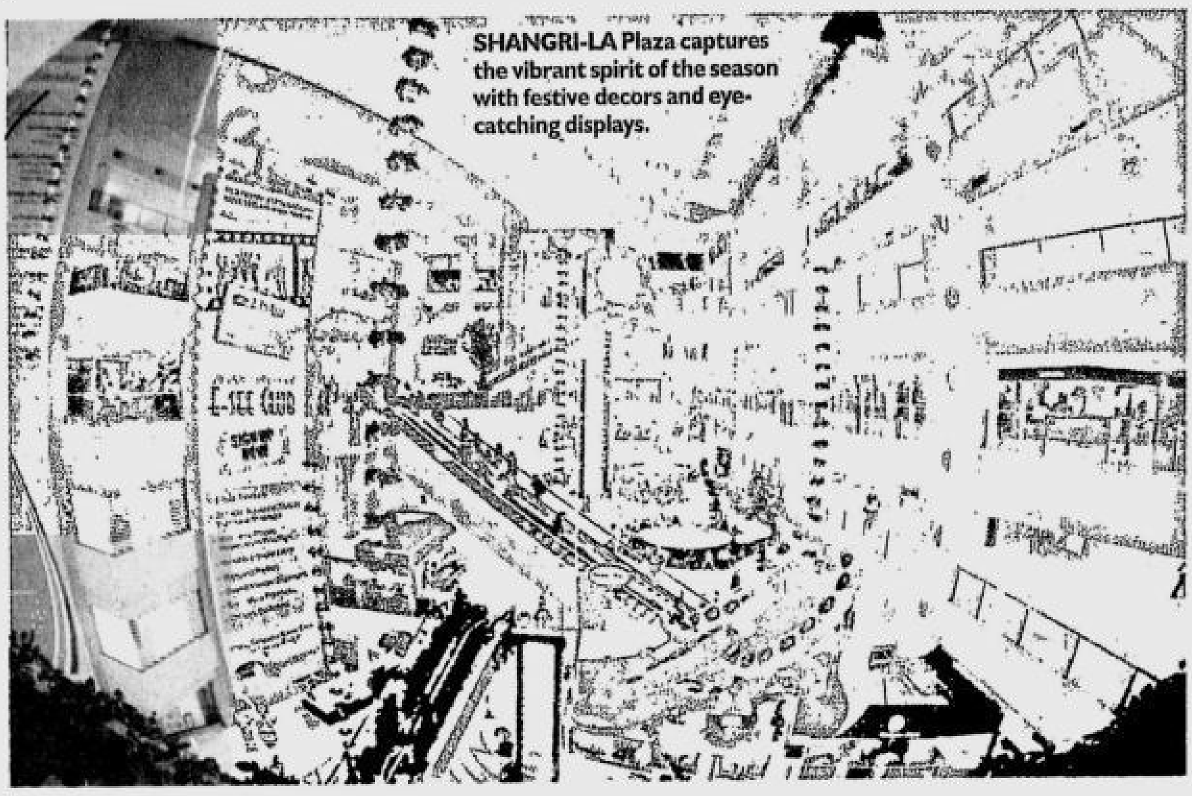
Don't miss the "Little Voices of Christmas," featuring the Ateneo Primary on Dec. 21, 6 p.m.

Christmas spirit will surely fill the air when the Manila Symphony Orchestra takes the stage on Dec. 22, 7 p.m.

Trumpet Musicademy presents the "Great Sea Adventure" on Dec. 23, 7 p.m.

Swing to the beat of Christmas Melodies from the Pizzicato String Quartet (Dec. 24, 5 p.m.); Have A Resounding Christmas with the PPO Brass Quintet (Dec. 28, 7 p.m.); the PPO String Ensemble packs Dec. 29 with Holiday Tidings of Joy; Let the PPO Woodwind Quintet enchant you with their Sonatas on Dec. 30; And Trio Royale's Melodies of the Season promises to be the fitting farewell to Shang's 2007.

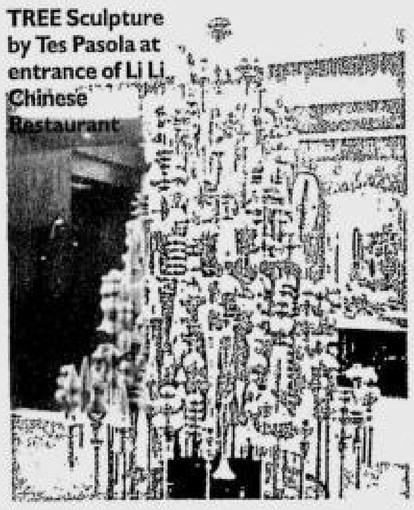
Shang's music scene ushers in 2008 with piano and guitar recitals on Jan. 5, 7 p.m. together with the Sounds of the New Year featuring the UP Concert Chorus on Jan. 6, 7 p.m.


SHANGRI-LA Plaza captures the vibrant spirit of the season with festive decors and eye-catching displays.

HANGING paper sceptres at hotel lobby with harpist Holly Angel Paraiso

Designer's Christmas

HYATT HOTEL AND CASINO MANILA is holding a designer Christmas exhibit. Christmas Impressions at Hyatt. Internationally recognized paper artist Tes Pasola was commissioned to create the one-of-a-kind holiday exhibition. The exhibit underscores the importance of conservation and recycling. All proceeds from the sale of Pasola's works of art will benefit Hyatt's chosen charities: Kythe and Make-A-Wish Foundations. Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila is at 1588 Pedro Gil cor M.H. Del Pilar, Malate, Manila, tel. 451234.


TREE Sculpture by Tes Pasola at entrance of Li Li Chinese Restaurant

New Year's countdown

WELCOME THE NEW YEAR AT THE Heritage Hotel Manila's Riviera Café! Join the New Year's eve dinner, dance and countdown party for only P1,600 per person inclusive of dinner, party favors and one round of drink. Live bands will perform. On New Year's day, have brunch/dinner buffet at the cafe for P1,188 per person (8548888, e-mail foodbev@heritagehotelmanila.com). The Heritage Hotel Manila is managed by the Millennium Hotels and Resorts.

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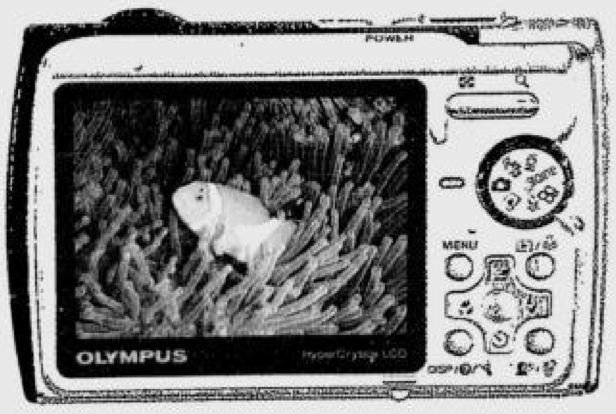

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TRAVEL BRIEFS

'Home' for the holidays

THIS CHRISTMAS, EXPERIENCE THE FEEL of home in a resort setting at Discovery Shores. Discovery Shores is featuring Yuletide Feast, a special dinner buffet on Dec. 23-25, 29-30 and Jan. 1, 7-10 p.m., at Sands Restaurant. Prepared by chef Kit Carpio, it is available for P950+ per person. Kids can meet and greet Santa Dec. 22-25, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Lounge. The New Year's Eve Countdown Party on Dec. 31 will feature the Livewire band and DJ Marlon of Wave 89.1. Gala dinner buffet at 7 p.m. is at Sands Restaurant for P1,850+ per person, inclusive of the show. On Jan. 1, 11 a.m., a special New Year's Mass will be held (036-2884500 or 02-7208888/6838392).

Special holiday rates

The Marco Polo Plaza Cebu is offering special rates Dec. 23-Jan. 2 starting at P3,800 net per night, inclusive of buffet breakfast, access to the pool and gym, and discounts for those staying for two nights or longer. Christmas carols can be enjoyed at the hotel lobby Dec. 15-23, 6 p.m. On Christmas eve, buffet dinners will be served at Café Marco, El Viento al fresco restaurant and pool bar. At the Grand Ballroom, Interact Band will mix Christmas carols with retro music. A traditional Christmas eve Mass follows at 10 p.m. with a live reenactment of the Nativity. A specially prepared Noche Buena of Filipino-style *merienda* items will be served afterward. On New Year's eve, the hotel will have three parties in different venues (02-8871263; 032-2531111; e-mail mpplaza@marcopolohotels.com).

Cruise ship tourism

The Department of Tourism (DOT) is exploring the tourism potential of cruise ships. It is currently coordinating with the private sector to make the country a major Asian destination for cruise ships and increase visitor arrivals through this means. Recently, the M/V Costa Allegra arrived at South Harbor in Manila. Tour operator Travel People organized visits for the cruise ship passengers to Corregidor, Tagaytay, etc. The Italian M/V Costa Allegra has scheduled several calls in Manila. The vessel features the Philippines in two of its Asian itineraries, Treasures of the Far East and Jewels of the Far East.

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Ponkan
Powdered Fruit Drink Mix
Thursday December 2007
Magnolia
Lemonade
Magnolia
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2007
Low Calorie
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Powdered Fruit Drink Mix
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Magnolia
Orange Mango
Powdered Fruit Drink Mix
Net Wt. 45g
Saturday December
2007
Low Calorie
Magnolia
Lemon Iced Tea
Powdered Iced Tea Drink Mix
Net Wt. 45g
2007
Sunday December
Magnolia
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December
Sunday
45g makes 1 liter
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Pito ito,
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Enjoy seven flavors, seven days a week with Magnolia Powdered Fruit & Tea Drink Mixes. Masarap at fortified with vitamins and minerals. At sa halagang ₱7.50 na 45g pack, makaka-isang litro ka ng fruit or tea drink. So, kahit mag-isang flavor kada araw, kayang-kaya dahil affordable talaga.
May choices ka na, sa presyo panalo ka pa!

Maging iba!
Dito ka na sa pitong mas masarap
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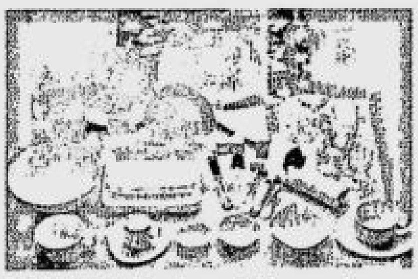

ASIANA Airlines' new tableware items for its in-flight service

Airline launches branded tableware

ASIANA AIRLINES (OZ) IS SERVING up 50 new tableware items for its in-flight service. Fifty kinds of branded tableware, including 35 place settings and glasses for first and business class, and 15 articles including tableware and trays for travel class, are being introduced in Asiana flights worldwide.

The change in tableware comes with the roll-out of Asiana's new corporate identity, embodied by its logo featuring bolder lettering and a dynamic red wing symbol. To celebrate the new table settings, Asiana held a launching ceremony for executives and guests at the LSG Sky Chef Korea Catering Center in Incheon, its main hub.

Asiana tapped renowned German brand Rosenthal AG to exclusively design tableware for first- and business-class travelers. The 130-year-old design company selected a soft, rounded triangle motif that closely resembles the new logo.

Place settings for western meals will now be styled in classic white while the place settings for Korean meals will use the traditional Ten Symbols of Long Life (*ship jang saeng*), intimating the beauty of Korea.

For travel class, tableware is designed in harmony with in-flight interiors, practicality, convenience and luxurious trends. In addition to tableware, Asiana has been changing designs applied to cabin interiors and onboard products in line with its new corporate identity.

Asiana is among an exclusive group of international airlines awarded five-star ranking in the World Airline Star Ranking of Skytrax, the international aviation research analyst. The World Airline Star Ranking is conducted every year, ranking airlines worldwide on the basis of their airport and cabin services.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

B	J	O	R	N	■	R	O	I	L	■	M	I	M	O	S	A	■	O	R	A
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Home for the holidays

ONCE AGAIN, IT'S THAT TIME OF the year when the home takes centerstage with its blinking lights, Christmas trees, metallic balls, lush wreaths and other stunning yuletide ornaments.

To give shoppers some ideas on how to decorate their homes this Christmas season, Alabang Town Center recently gathered three celebrities to put together their own Christmas-themed room settings.

Dubbed as "Home for the Holidays," the exhibit showcases furniture and accessories from the Alabang Town Center's Home Zone merchants. Now on its fifth year, "Home for the Holidays" not only features the best home furnishings that the mall's Home Zone section offers, the exhibit also gives shoppers a bounty of design ideas to execute in their own homes.

For host, radio anchor, book author, humanitarian and environmental advocate Christine Bersola-Babao, participating in the "Home for the Holidays" was a very rewarding experience.

"It's a fantasy fulfilled!" Christine says about her set-up which she describes as minimalist and modern but with a touch of Pinoy.

While her design is dominated by a lot of items in various shades of brown—such as the low center table from Urban Chic, the throw pillow covers and even the carpet—Christine definitely has her favorite. Apart from the fiberglass magazine rack from Store One, she also loves the jewelry boxes and the *belen* from Tesoro's, which she collects.

IDA [illegible] Henares picks the silver bell accents from [illegible]

Ida Ramos Henares, AVP and head of the GMA Artist Center, has a lot of great family traditions every Christmas time. But just like everyone else, family gatherings and great food are a must. This is probably why she chose to glam up her own dining room set-up.

For her design, Ida got a square dining table that went great with quaint chairs in black and blue prints from Store One. "It was hard to match the blue of the chairs," she admits. But after incorporating table napkins, napkin holders and a majestic centerpiece in various shades of blue, Ida came up with an effortlessly sublime table setting. Add to that outstanding silver bell accents and lanterns from Rustan's and Store One respectively and anyone would surely want to join Ida for a scrumptious meal in her dining table.

The design of former Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Abbygale Arenas-de Leon, who is also an image consultant running the Personifi Image Studio, is a reflection of her ideal home.

Since she lives in a condominium, her design choices are pretty limited. This is exactly why she opted for a lanai project for "Home for the Holidays." Abbygale's lanai set-up is teeming with wood, from the tables and the chairs to the accessories.

Amidst all the browns though are bursts of colors found in a vertical lamp from Balikbayan Handicrafts and a curtain made up of various materials such as beads and capiz shells.

Abbygale's favorite part of her design is the Christmas lantern that she hung on a sleek wooden post.

"I used to live in Pampanga and we used to have a lot of *parols*," she says. "I had to put a *parol* in my set-up because we don't have one at home."

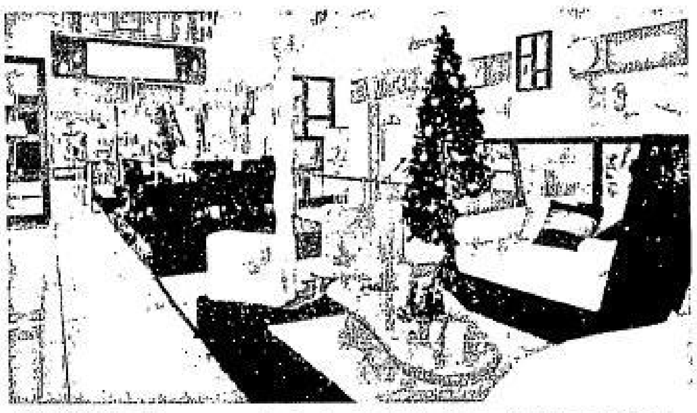
Asked about her Christmas décor shopping at the Alabang Town Center, Abbygale says that she enjoyed pointing at all the wonderful pieces she saw since Home Zone does have a lot of choices. "It was like an outlet for me," she says. "I'm so glad I did it."

Having featured designs from A-listers such as Angel Aquino, Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo, Tweety de Leon, Ayen Munji-Laurel and Daphne Oseña among others, next year's exhibit is sure to look forward to.

"Home for the Holidays" is ongoing at the Alabang Town Center until Dec. 28. It features furniture and home accessories from Home Zone merchants Balikbayan Handicrafts, Blims Fine Furniture, Cereo Candle Exchange, Designer Blooms, Dwellings, Gourdo's, Home & Beyond, Home Essence, Jo-Liza, Kartini Asia, Philux, Robles Heritage, Rustan's, Shell Canvas & Upholstery Supply, Showcase Carpet, Store One, Tesoro's and Urban Chic.

ABBYGALE Arenas-De Leon with her laid-back lanai design

CHRISTINE [illegible]



STUNNING living room design by Christine Bersola-Babao, dining room by Ida Ramos Henares and lanai by Abbygale Arenas-de Leon, displayed at the Home Zone aisle of Alabang Town Center until Dec. 28

HOLIDAY CLASSICS REDEFINED #25
The Crazy Stripe Crew
as worn by: WILL.I.AM, MUSICIAN
NOW OPEN
GLORIETTA, AYALA CENTER · TRINOMA
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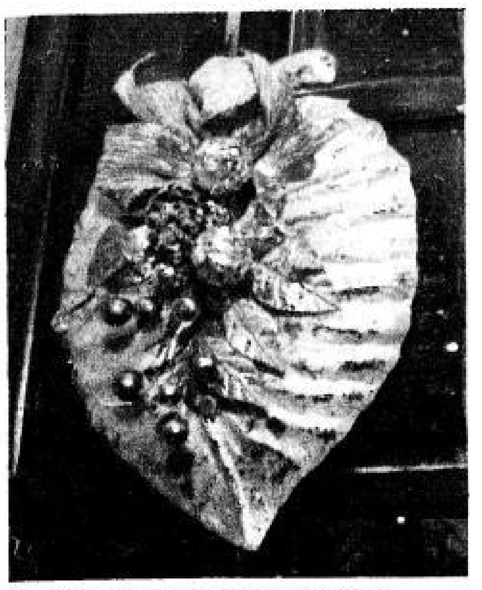
ALL-YEAR-ROUND taper candleholder in white finish



SILVER-AND-LIME papier maché leaf

Pears and limes

SILVER-AND-LIME twig tree with metal base

FIVE NEW THEMES FOR Christmas trimmings at the Color It Christmas shop on P. Guevarra Street, in the city of San Juan, are staying away from the traditional colors in holiday decorating.

Natural harvest, gold and copper, pear with blanched cones, champagne gold, silver and lime—the combinations of colors for these themes are opulent and sophisticated.

The Color It Christmas store is at 325 A&B P. Guevarra St., San Juan (tels. 7249110 and 7267609).

TWINE garland with pear and bleached cones

PHOTOS BY AUGUST DELA CRUZ

12-FEET silver-and-lime Christmas tree with crystal stones and holographic glitters

Colors of Christmas

OUR HOME, THE LIFESTYLE store, suggests exciting new ways to create that holiday mood with a play on colors:

Green and blue. These are the naturals—inspired by blue skies and green gardens, these add coolness and serenity to living rooms.

Copper and gold. Metallic colors exude extravagance, giving a room a luxurious feel of Christmas bliss.

Red and gold. Classic and chic, this decor combination brings in the cheer to Christmas gatherings.

Black and silver. This combination is sheer sophistication.

Silvery gray and dark chocolate. For a contemporary and experimental way of celebrating Christmas.

The collection is available at all Our Home stores. In Metro Manila, these are located at SM Megamall, SM City Fairview, SM Southmall, V-Mall, The Block at SM City North-Edsa, and at the Mall of Asia. Its provincial branches are located at SM Supermalls in Bacoor, Sta. Rosa, Baguio, Pampanga, Clark, Lucena, Marilao, Dasmarinas, Batangas, Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro.

GINGERBREAD man, snowman and Christmas tree candles

BACK TO NATURE. Sky blue and green are combined for a cool and relaxing Yuletide ambiance.

Handy holiday picks

GET HOLIDAY PRESENTS from Handyman like power tools for the toolmen, practical houseware for the homemaker, auto emergency kits and motorcycle basics for the car or bike enthusiast, and home and office organizers for other members of the family.

Handyman Gift Certificates are available at all Customer Service Counters in P500 and P100 denominations. What's more, you'll get a free wall clock for every purchase of P1,000 worth of Greenfield tool sets.

Impact drills, angle grinders or any Black & Decker Power tool will be appreciated by the men of the house.

Mothers, meanwhile, will love a Handy Food Steamer, a heavy-duty chrome Pneumatic stool, a nonstick flat iron, a tabletop tranquility fountain or a splash-proof, anti-leak Alpha Slim Heater.

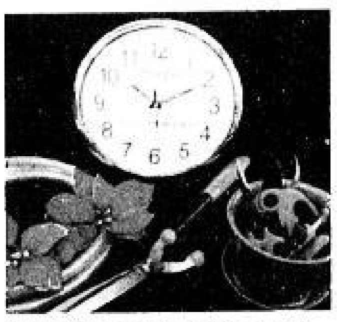
If your brother or sister is planning on getting a personal pad this New Year, a Philips Vacuum Cleaner or a colorful Bathroom scale is a great housewarming-cum-Christmas gift. Meanwhile, high-quality travel tumblers that are skid- and scratch-resistant are practical presents for a sports buff or a travel enthusiast.

Is your best friend renovating the bedroom? Locksets are perfect gift ideas. At Handyman, all Stanley lock sets are at 20-percent off.

If you would rather give something that the whole family could enjoy, a twin-size Pillow Rest bed (which comes with free 36cm high output pump), a queen size Downy Airbed (with free two pillows and a 30cm high output pump) or an energy-efficient Evaporative cooler are ideal presents.

ENERGY-EFFICIENT Alpha Evaporative cooler, available at all Handyman branches

BLACK & Decker Power Impact drill (P4,499.75 with free 107 pieces of Drill Bits set) and Angle Grinder (P3,299.75), available at Handyman



GET a free wall clock for every P1,000 worth of Greenfield tools, ongoing until Dec. 31 at all Handyman branches.

Useful gifts for your kitchen

TUPPERWARE, MAKERS OF HIGH-QUALITY food-storage containers, presents smart and functional gift items at a discount.

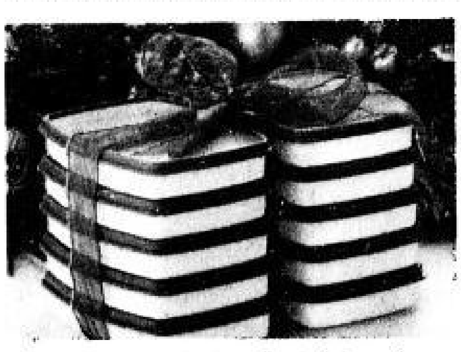
Buyers get a 15-percent discount when they buy the containers in a set of five. They get 30-percent discount when they buy them in sets of 10.

The Oyster Mini Case is perfect for ready-to-eat and bite-size snacks. It is ideal for keeping everyday basic beauty essentials like pressed powder, lipstick and mascara.

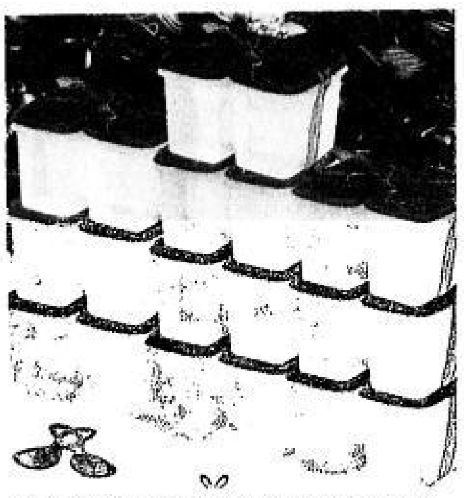
It's also a versatile organizer where you can keep small items such as sewing materials, first-aid necessities and medicines.

The Shelf Saver with Spoon Duo can keep dry staples like sugar, spices, flour, and powdered drinks. With its accompanying spoon, you can easily scoop out dry powders and keep them dry and fresh. It is airtight and has a liquid-tight seal.

The Solo Snack Box also has an airtight, leak-proof seal; it is safe for transporting and carrying. It's also compact and convenient, slim enough to fit in totes and bags. And with inner partitions that help retain the freshness and flavor of two kinds of food, you can bring your favorite meals anytime and anywhere you want.

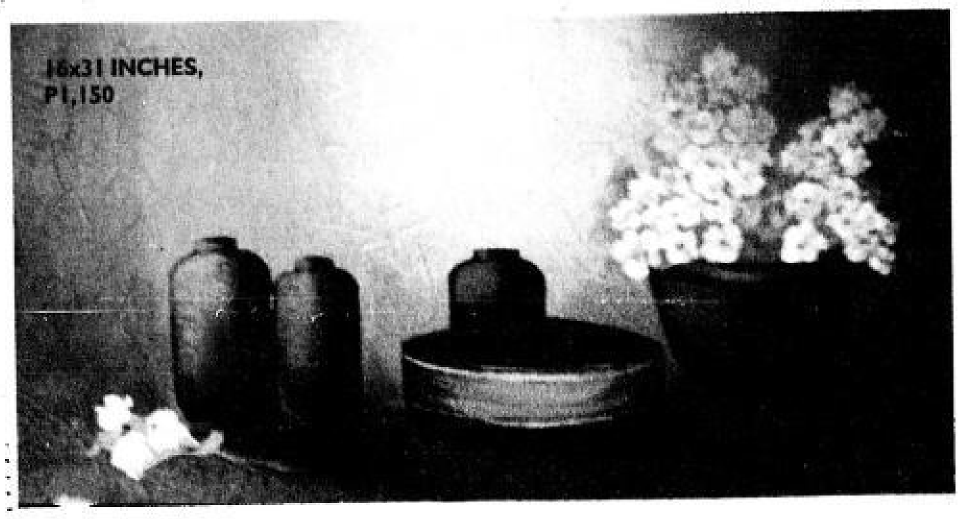


SOLO Snack Box is virtually airtight and leak-proof, and is safe for transporting and carrying.

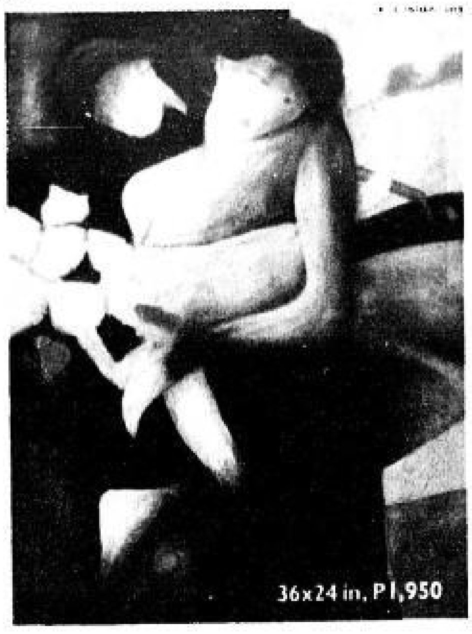


SHELF Saver with Spoon Duo to keep your kitchen organized and fuss-free

OYSTER Mini Case is perfect for ready-to-eat and bite-size snacks.



16x31 INCHES, P1,150

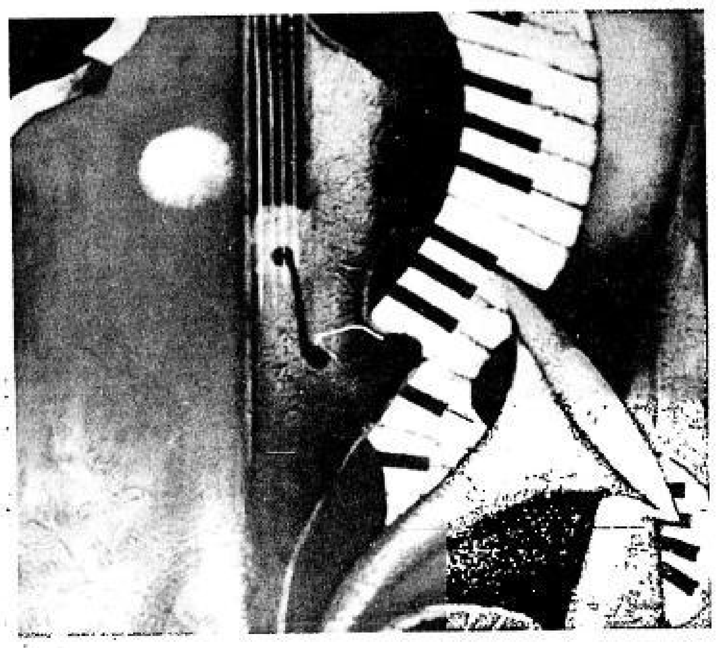


36x24 in, P1,950

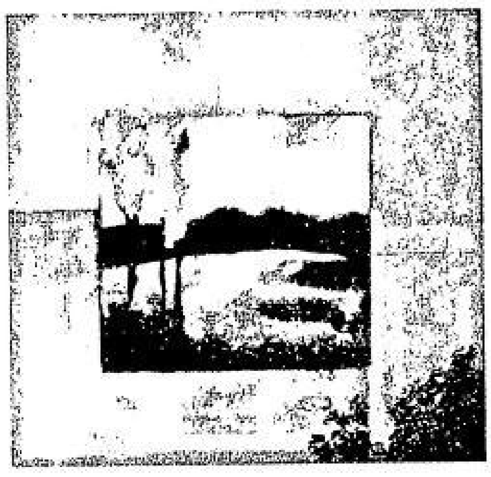
BAR set

Art, hearth and home

ORIGINAL oil-on-canvas works of art depicting different subjects, from Oriental still lifes to music-theme art to European street scenes, are on sale at Club Fun at Glorietta 3 Park, right across Shangri-La Makati Hotel. Open daily, day and night, to accommodate odd-hour shoppers, Club Fun also sells home décor and accessories.

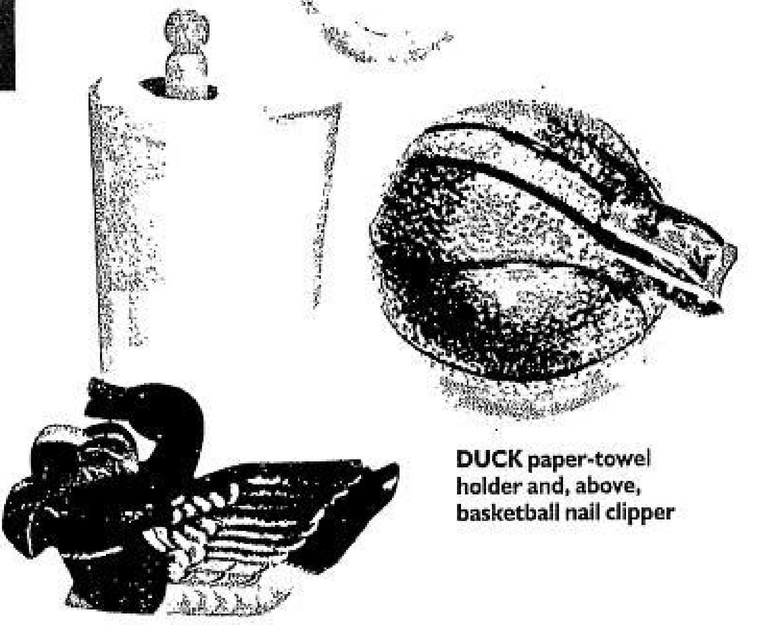


31x31 in, P2,250



24x24 in, P1,500

CERAMIC cookie jar



DUCK paper-towel holder and, above, basketball nail clipper

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C2 cool & clean Green Tea 1 liter
share this season!

Character analysis through 12 animal signs

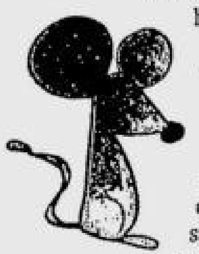
By Marites Allen

AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR in the practice of feng shui is the concept of the Chinese animal signs.

The 12 Chinese animal signs are symbols, but they offer wonderful insights into people's characters and personalities. Chinese astrology is not solely based on planets and stars, but uses philosophy, the lunar calendar, the cosmos and the rhythms of nature to gain wisdom on, and understanding of, character. The first step in analyzing character is a generalized reading based on the animal sign that rules a person's year of birth. You will be surprised at how uncannily accurate the behavioral tendencies and personality types can get!

Rat (1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996)

They work hard to achieve their goals, acquire possessions, and are likely to be perfectionists. They are basically thrifty with money. These people generally enjoy all forms of social interaction, and no party is complete without their lively wit and humor.



They are experienced organizers and are able to handle even the most difficult problems. These people are fair in their conduct and expect the same from those they work with in return. They are usually generous with both their compliments and attention, though it would be wise not to push or corner them, because they value their privacy.

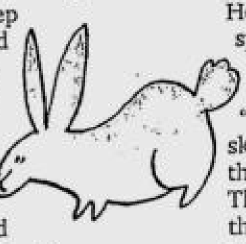
Ox (1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997)

They are patient and inspire confidence in others. These people speak little, but are intelligent, and when necessary, they are both articulate and eloquent. Oxen are very stable, persistent and stubborn people with more strength and fortitude than any other sign. They are incredibly patient, tireless in work, and capable of enduring any amount of hardship without complaint. They are very logical and are extremely systematic in whatever they do. They are rarely driven by the prospect of financial gain, but these people are always welcome because of their honesty.

Tiger (1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998)

Tiger people are sensitive, given to deep thinking, and capable of great sympathy. They can be extremely short-tempered, however. They cannot make up their minds, resulting in poor decisions or sound ones made too late. Tigers are born leaders, and are admired because of their determination and optimism; they need, however, to learn moderation in all things. Their magnetic personalities and natural air of authority make them irresistible. Although they can be courageous and generous friends, if they are not able to achieve what they want, they can be inflexible and self-centered.

Rabbit (1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999)



They are very deep emotionally, and have a strong artistic or poetic streak. They often make ideal diplomats or politicians because of their grace and beautiful manners. Although they get along well with everyone, they are basically reserved creatures. They are just not able to thrive in a competitive environment, and get anxious if someone forces them to take chances. Often opting for safety over risk, they may miss good opportunities, which is unfortunate, because they would make good gamblers with their uncanny gift for choosing the right thing. However, they seldom gamble, as they are conservative and wise.

Dragon (1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000)

Most Chinese parents aspire to have a Dragon child because it is the natural sign of nobility in their culture. They have natural charisma and are gifted with power and luck. They like to do everything on a grand scale. They are egoistical and ambitious, and will stop at nothing to get what they want. They are aggressive, determined, self-confident and dominant, and can also be snobs if they choose to. They love power, but usually handle it well. While these people enjoy being the center of attention, they can also be charitable. They won't hesitate to help a friend in need, and when everybody else has given up, they step forward to solve the problem with authority and dignity.

Snake (1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001)

They are the wisest and most enigmatic of all animal signs. They say little but possess great wisdom. They never have to worry about money; they are financially fortunate. They are often quite vain, selfish, and a bit stingy. Yet they have tremendous sympathy for others and try to help those less fortunate. Snake people tend to overdo, since they have doubts about other people's judgment and prefer to rely on themselves. They are determined in whatever they do and hate to fail. Although calm on the surface, they are intense and passionate. Snake people are usually good-looking and sometimes have marital problems because they are fickle.

Horse (1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002)

Born to run, Horses are active, physical people with lots of energy. They are very productive and hardworking. Horses love social events, and love the spotlight. Innately rebellious, they hate to be pressured or told what to do. The horse is cunning and full of "street smarts." They are cheerful, skillful with money, and perceptive, although they sometimes talk too much. They are wise, talented, good with their hands, and sometimes have a weakness for members of the opposite sex. They are very independent and rarely listen to advice.

Sheep (1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003)

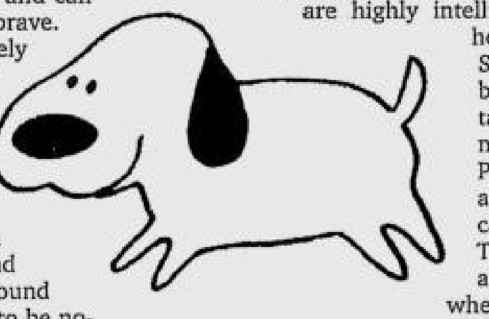
They are elegant and highly accomplished in the arts. The most creative of all the signs, they are also the most insecure. They need to feel loved and protected. They have great sense of fashion and chances are they will prefer to be designers or painters, or go into the kind of profession where they can make the most of their gift for creating beautiful things. They are also wanderers by nature and are happy to set off on journeys to meet new people and to see the world. They can be lazy sometimes. Given the choice, they would definitely choose to marry a wealthy person and sit back for the rest of their lives.

Monkey (1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004)

These people are often inventors, entertainers and the creative geniuses behind anything ingenious, including mischief. They have natural quick-wittedness which enables them to understand what is happening and then make a right decision. In general, with their agile minds and multiple talents, they can master any subject. Monkeys are great at problem-solving and enjoy listening to the problems of their friends. They also cannot hide their feelings, and tend to wear their hearts on their sleeves. They are strong-willed but their anger cools quickly. Having common sense, Monkey people have a deep desire for knowledge and have excellent memories.

Rooster (1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005)

They are often a bit eccentric, and often have rather difficult relationship with others. They always think they are right and usually are. They can be selfish and too outspoken, but are always interesting and can be extremely brave. They are actively interested in clothes, colors, and accessories, and usually are very critical about their own appearance and those that surround them. They like to be noticed and flattered. They may be criticized for being boastful but their compassion and wisdom, which come to the fore when others need their help, make up for that deficiency.

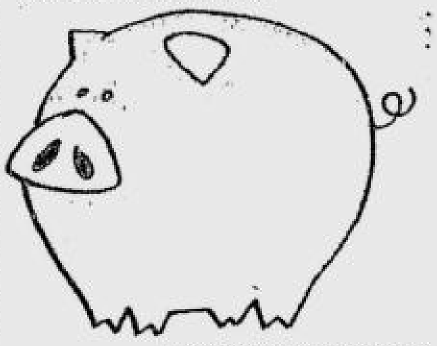


Dog (1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006)

They have a deep sense of loyalty, are honest, and inspire other people's confidence because they know how to keep secrets. They care little for wealth, yet somehow always seem to have money. They can be cold emotionally and sometimes distant at parties. They can find fault with many things and are noted for their sharp tongues. Dog people make good leaders. They are idealistic, and dreamers to the core. They never really accept the fact that injustice and oppression can exist in the world. They have a strong sense of duty and responsibility, but they should learn to relax and realize that it is impossible to control everything.

Pig (1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007)

They are probably the most generous among all the zodiac signs. Pigs are highly intelligent and have hearts of gold. Sadly, they can be taken advantage of by others not so generous. Pigs love luxury and have impeccable manners. They love nature and are happiest when they are out somewhere, far from the city. They also tend to see things through rose-colored lenses. No matter how bad problems seem to be, they try to work them out, honestly if sometimes impulsively. Generally, no matter how old they get, they still only see and believe that people are basically good. They constantly sacrifice their own happiness and comfort for the sake of their loved ones.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Feng shui ways to win

ON DEC. 2 TO JAN. 7 READERS WILL have a chance to win exciting prizes while discovering valuable information about the art and science of feng shui, the ancient Chinese way of luck enhancement.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer, in partnership with World Of Feng Shui Philippines (WOFS) and with the support of Smart Wolfpac and Washington Inc., brings back last year's most successful text promo called "Thess Allen's Feng Shui Ways to Win-Part Two." The promo is in line with the third run of "Marites Allen Philippines Feng Shui Extravaganza Updates" on Jan. 19, 2008 (Year of the Earth Rat) at the Grand Ballroom of the New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City. The event will be hosted by feng shui expert, Marites Allen.

The text trivia promo will allow readers to answer one question each day. The answer to the question can be found in a feng shui article to be printed in the Lifestyle section of the INQUIRER. Two other correlated articles will be published separately today and on Dec. 23. To join, Smart and Globe/Sun subscribers simply have to submit a one-time registration by keying in THESS REG <name/age/address/gender> (Ex. THESS REG <Bona Sy/25/Marikina City/F) and send it to 2861. Only one registration per mobile number will be allowed. To send an entry, Smart and Globe/Sun subscribers simply have to choose from four possible answers to the question of the day. For inquiries, call 9147888, 9147112, 4126888 or 0920-9509390.

Trivia Question: Character Analysis through the 12 Animal Signs

Which animal sign is regarded as a sign of nobility and good luck in the Chinese culture?

a. Horse
b. Tiger
c. Dragon
d. Rooster

Sunny calling this Yuletide

SUN CELLULAR'S SUGGESTION for a stocking-stuffer this Christmas is the Samsung X510. The triband clamshell phone comes with a VGA camera. It has surfing capabilities via WAP, built-in hands-free speaker etc.

For a low monthly service fee of P999, you can get three phones and three separate lines. Only one person needs to register as a postpaid subscriber to get all three.

Sun Group Plan 999 subscribers will enjoy Sun-to-Sun nonstop calling and text messaging through the 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited service.

An added bonus is 750 free text messages to other networks.

Online service

If you still think that staying online on Yahoo! or MSN Messenger while you're on the go means that you have to be in an Internet café or lug around your laptop and pay Wi-Fi connection charges, then you are in for a nice surprise, thanks to Sun Cellular!

Sun offers a cost-effective way for you to chat—as much as you want—with friends, loved ones and online buddies through your cellular phone with Sun iMessenger. This remarkable service allows you to send and receive unlimited messages with your AOL, ICQ, MSN, and Yahoo! Messenger contacts here and abroad for a low fixed rate.

With Sun iMessenger, you can enjoy being logged in to your IM account whenever and wherever. Just have an IM account and a Sun SIM (postpaid or prepaid) and text SUNIM to 2746 to register.

The service costs only P0.50 per message sent. Better yet, save even more by texting BUY DAY to purchase a day's worth of unlimited Sun iMessenger at only P20, BUY WEEK at an unbeatable rate of P100 for 7 days, or BUY MONTH to 2746 for a month of unlimited instant messaging.

For more information, log on to www.suncellular.com.ph or call Sun's 24-hour hotline at 3958000.

Choice indulgences

GIVE YOUR LOVED ONES A MARKS & Spencer food and wine gift tray this holiday season. Each selection is packed and filled with the choicest goodies and fine spirits guaranteed to liven up everyone's Christmas celebration.

There are three food & wine gift tray selections to choose from: Classic Favorites, Pure Indulgence and Luxury Collection.

Classic Favorites has a selection of your all-time favorite Marks & Spencer goodies like Digestive Sweetmeal Biscuits, Swiss Hazelnut Chocolate Bar, Extremely Choco Shortcake Biscuits, House Red Wine, Fiorelli Pasta, Green & Black Olive Sauce, Baked Beans, Cream of Mushroom Soup and Fairtrade Gold Teabags.

If you want to spoil your family and friends just a little bit more, the Pure Indulgence gift tray is the perfect gift. This selection includes Moscatel de Valencia Wine, Penne Pasta, Classic Pesto Sauce, Carbonara Sauce, Instant Mocha, Fairtrade Café Richroast, Swiss Dark Chocolate Bar, 8 Caramel Wafer Bars and Biscuit Curls.

For the ultimate food and wine gift tray, give your loved one a Luxury Collection gift tray, which offers some of the finest and most exclusive Marks & Spencer food and wine products.

The Luxury Collection contains one bottle of Gold Label Pinot Noir, Speciality Festine Pasta, Speciality Amatriciana Sauce, Sundried Tomato in Olive Oil, Organic China Pure Green Teabags, Fairtrade Café Gold Rich Roast, Dutch Chocolate Shortcake Biscuits, Speciality Organic Fairtrade Almonds Chocolate Bar, Speciality Honey Oated Cookies and Blackcurrant Conserve.

Also available are wine gift trays. The Table Wine Duo has one bottle each of House Red and House White wine. The Bordeaux Wine Duo has Gold Label Cabernet Sauvignon and Gold Label Chardonnay, while the Australian Wine Duo has Burra Brook Cabernet Sauvignon and Burra Brook Chardonnay.

Aside from a great selection of food and wine gift trays, you can also trust a Marks & Spencer beauty gift set to satisfy any Christmas wish list. The gift sets come in assorted charming containers and are available in timeless scents such as Florentyna, Magnolia, Rose and Lavender. And if you want to try a new scent, why not go for the Ingredients collection or Fruity Beauty?

If you can't decide on which Marks & Spencer gift to give, then you can always count on a Gift Voucher to answer your gift-giving dilemma. Available in P250, P500 and P1,000 denominations, the Gift Vouchers come with a choice of free seasonal card and envelope.

Marks & Spencer stores are located at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3, Alabang Town Center, Power Plant Mall, Gateway Mall, SM Megamall, SM Mall of Asia, SM North Edsa, SM Pampanga, TriNoma, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila and Ayala Center Cebu.

CLASSIC Favorites—P2,495.00

BORDEAUX Wine Duo—P1,395.00

ENTERTAINMENT

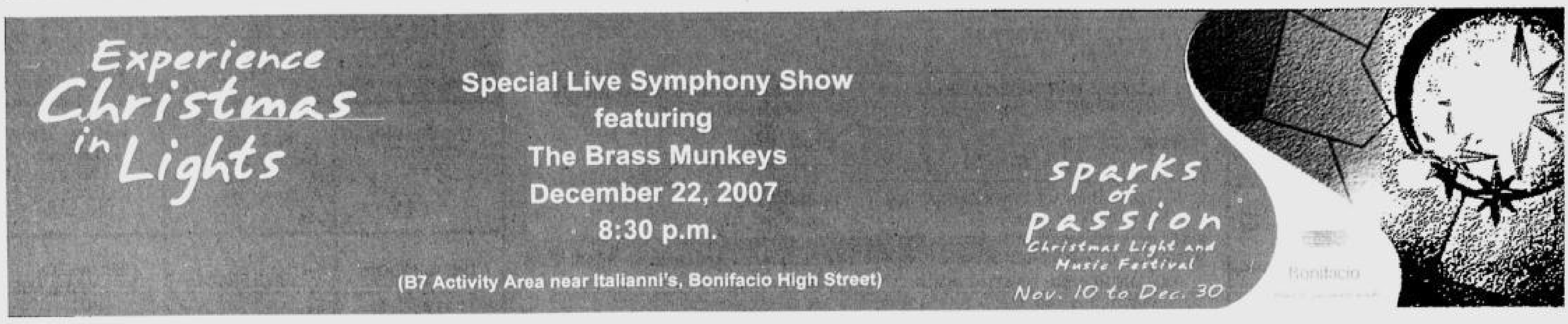
Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

INSIDE

▨ **There are 2 parallel film industries in RP** Viewfinder /K3
▨ **Dial M for 'Mali 'yan, Manash!' Or why rumors persist** Rushes /K2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sparks of passion
Christmas Light and Music Festival
Nov. 10 to Dec. 30

Bonifacio

METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

(INQUIRER Entertainment is running this MMFF guide to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema tour. The MMFF runs from Dec. 25 to Jan. 7, 2008.)

Katas ng Saudi

MMFF/12

Mau gets a standing ovation

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

MAU MARCELO, THE country's representative in the first "Asian Idol" singing competition, got a standing ovation after her initial performance of "Ako ang Nagwagi" and "Reach."

This was according to Lizza Nakpil, manager of the Filipino rock band Rivermaya, who's guesting in the regional tilt ongoing in Jakarta, Indonesia, and which winds up tonight.

"She blew everyone away. They think she's amazing," Nakpil, who's in Jakarta, told INQUIRER Entertainment via SMS on Friday.

Leading the ovation was Indian judge, Anu Malik, a popular Bollywood musical director, said Sandra Chavez, Marcelo's manager.

On the "Asian Idol" web site, Indonesian bet Mike Mohede said of Mau: "She's extraordinary. She sings as if she's … one of God's masterpieces in heaven."

The "Asian Idol" advertisements on Indonesian TV network RCTI dubbed Marcelo as the "Queen of Competitions," alluding to the fact that she had previously topped countless amateur singing contests, "from Lucena to Batangas" when she was a teener.

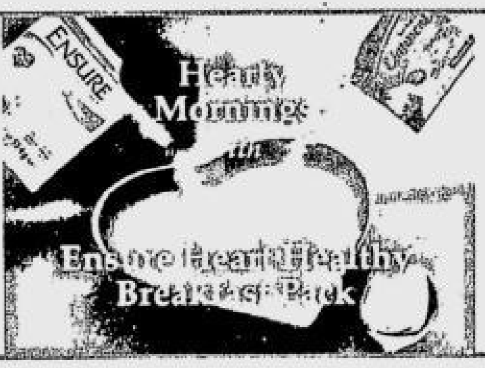
Studious

Prior to her trip to Jakarta, Marcelo attended workshops under stage director Freddie Santos and voice teacher Zebedee Zuñiga for almost a month.

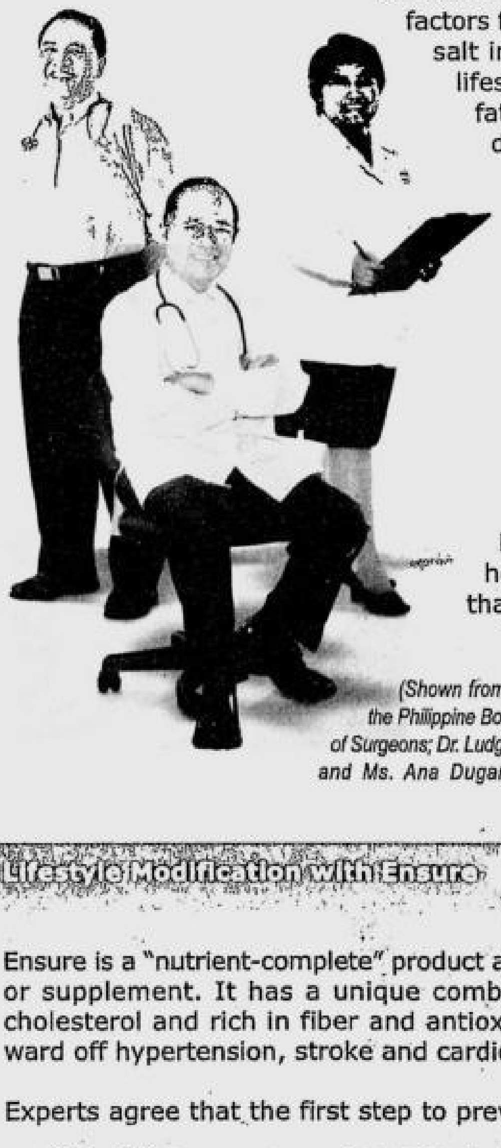
Santos recalled that Marcelo had been "studious."

"She was totally committed to the [workshop program]," which combines the "best techniques for pop and stage singing," Santos

MAU/14


ENSURE HEART HEALTHY BREAKFAST PACK

Ensure, an adult nutritional drink highly recommended by doctors, has partnered with Quaker Oats to launch the new Ensure Heart Healthy Breakfast Pack. This breakfast option combines one sachet of Ensure and one sachet of Quaker Oats natural soluble fiber to address a major health concern in the country-heart disease. Ensure has low cholesterol and is rich with fiber and antioxidants. Quaker Oats, on the other hand, has 100% natural soluble fiber that may help reduce blood cholesterol levels and lower the risk of heart disease.
Hearty Mornings
Ensure Heart Healthy Breakfast Pack


Heart Health and Nutrition According to Experts

Diseases caused by the hardening of the blood vessels and arteries, or atherosclerosis, now rank as the leading cause of death among Filipinos.[1]

In fact, the Philippines has the highest mortality rate for high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, in Asia. Our country is third to Japan in the incidence of strokes and fourth to Singapore for Coronary Artery Disease (CAD).[2]

High blood pressure and CAD have contributed to the rise of Cardiovascular Disease (CVD). Risk factors for hypertension and CAD include high salt intake, genetics, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, hyperlipidemia or high levels of fat and cholesterol in the blood, illness, diabetes, smoking and stress.

To help prevent heart disease, experts recommend a lifestyle change. The guidelines of healthy living are simple: eating right, getting more physical activity, managing stress and having a positive outlook towards life.

Prescription for a Healthy Heart

According to Ana Dugang, Chief Dietician at the Makati Medical Center, heart disease is now more prevalent than it was some years ago.

(Shown from left to right: Dr. Fernando Lopez, Executive Director of the Philippine Board of Surgery and Past President of the Philippine College of Surgeons; Dr. Ludgerio Torres, Medical Director of the Philippine Heart Center; and Ms. Ana Dugang, Chief Dietician of the Makati Medical Center)

"These may be attributed to the quality of food being served. With the occurrence of convenience food and fast food, a lot of people now realize that excessive consumption will lead to weight gain resulting in obesity and hypertension," she explains.

Dr. Ludgerio Torres, Cardiosurgeon and Medical Director of the Philippine Heart Center, agrees. "Cardiovascular disease is now the number one killer disease. This is due to the intake of fast food and junk food and a sedentary lifestyle. Salty and high cholesterol foods, as well as overeating, should be avoided."

Dr. Fernando Lopez, Executive Director of the Philippine Board of Surgery and Past President of the Philippine College of Surgeons, says that "numerous scientific researches have been conducted regarding nutrition and the important role it plays especially in patients undergoing treatment."

Eat to your Heart's Delight

To help control blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease, load up on the right fruits and vegetables, whole grains, plant-based oils, nuts and fish. Dairy products should be fat-free or low in fat. These types of food are low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants. Nutritional drinks also play an important part in a person's over-all health. Dr. Lopez adds that "nutritional drinks hasten the recovery of patients after major operations, particularly for cancer. Usually patients do not have an appetite for food in the immediate post-operative days, thus we rely on nutritional supplements to augment their caloric requirements."

For heart-healthy nutrition, have a balanced diet supplemented with "nutrient-complete" products.

[1] http://www.doh.gov.ph/cardiovascular
[2] World Health Organization, 1990

Lifestyle Modification with Ensure

Ensure is a "nutrient-complete" product and can be used as a meal replacement or supplement. It has a unique combination of ingredients that is low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants. Heart-healthy nutrition helps ward off hypertension, stroke and cardiovascular disease.

Experts agree that the first step to prevent the onset of CVD is to observe a healthy diet, exercise for at least 30 minutes every day and avoid stress.

Making healthy food choices is the cornerstone of heart disease prevention and control. For a proper diet, drink a glass of doctor-recommended Ensure everyday. It helps support your heart and your health because it's low in cholesterol and rich in fiber and antioxidants.

Ensure is available in creamy chocolate and delicious vanilla flavors at leading drugstores, supermarkets and groceries nationwide.

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Website : www.abbott.com.ph
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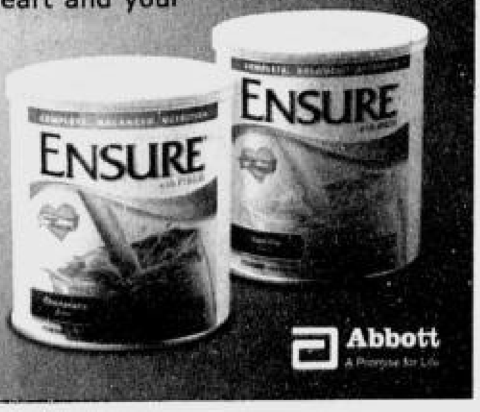

MMTA
METRO MANILA
THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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1 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
4 ENCHANTED / THE KINGDOM

PREMIERE

GRIND HOUSE : DEATH PROOF

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Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
3 HOOD OF HORROR
4 THE KINGDOM

starmall
EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7269150

3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) HOOD OF HORROR
5

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 8433094

1 HOOD OF HORROR
2 BATANES
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE KINGDOM

THEATRES

ENCHANTED
THE GOLDEN COMPASS
HITMAN

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-0271

THE GOLDEN COMPASS
BATANES

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 BEOWULF
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
4 ENCHANTED
5 CATACOMBS
6 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
7 THE KINGDOM
8 RESERVED
9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 PASUKOB

Blue Wave
MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) HOOD OF HORROR
2 (DOLBY) BATANES
3 (DOLBY) THE GOLDENT COMPASS
4 (DOLBY)

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
5 HOOD OF HORROR

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 BATANES
2 HOOD OF HORROR
3 ENCHANTED
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 THE KINGDOM
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
3 HOOD OF HORROR

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449348)

1 HITMAN
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
2 BOOGEY MAN
3 THE KINGDOM
4 FRED CLAUS

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 BEOWULF
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 ENCHANTED
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
3 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
4 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF

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(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
2 HITMAN
3 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
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1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 BEOWULF
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 PASUKOB / LIONS FOR LAMBS
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 ENCHANTED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 BEOWULF
2 GAME PLAN
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BEOWULF

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 BATANES
2 ONE MORE CHANCE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 HOOD OF HORROR
2 KIKAY
3 BATANES
4 BEOWULF

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 GRACIA
3 HITMAN
4 BATANES
5 30 DAYS OF NIGHT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 BATANES
2 HITMAN
3 GAME PLAN
4 BOOGEYMAN - 2

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 PLEASE CALL
2

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1 HITMAN • THX
1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30

2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40

3 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 CATACOMBS
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

5 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 10:00AM

6 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 10:00AM

7 ENCHANTED
12:50 3:00 5:10 7:20 9:30

8 indieSine: 3 DAYS of DARKNESS
12:40 2:45 4:50 6:55 9:00

9 BATANES
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

10 BEOWULF
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA
Ticket Price: P110 / P120

1 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
1:00 3:20 5:35 7:50 10:00

2 indieSine: 3 DAYS of DARKNESS
12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

3 BEOWULF 12:00 2:10 4:20
HITMAN 6:35 8:20 10:00

4 HOOD of HORROR
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:00

5 BATANES
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:15 10:00

6 ENCHANTED
12:40 2:55 5:10 7:25 9:40

7 PASUKOB
12:30 2:20 4:10 6:00 7:50 9:40

Midtown

1 CATACOMBS
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

2 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
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1 EASTERN PROMISES
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
11:05 1:30 3:55 6:25 9:00

3 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 BATANES
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

5 HOOD of HORROR
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

6 ENCHANTED 12:30 2:30
BEOWULF 4:35 6:45 9:00

7 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

8 CATACOMBS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

NOVALICHES
Ticket Price: P90 / P100 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 PASUKOB
2 BATANES
3 HOOD of HORROR
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

PIONEER
Ticket Price: P100 / P110 687-5378

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
3 CATACOMBS
4 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF

STA. ROSA
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 HITMAN
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 GAME PLAN
4 BATANES

LIPA
Ticket Price: P 90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 GAME PLAN
2 BOOGEYMAN 2
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 HITMAN

DASMARIÑAS
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (046) 416-4332

1 HOOD of HORROR
2 GHOST SON
3 BATANES
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

IMUS
Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 HOOD of HORROR
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 GHOST SON
4 BATANES

ANGELES
Ticket Price: P 90 / P95 (045) 892-2348

1 THE KINGDOM
2 FRED CLAUS
3 WE OWN THE NIGHT
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

TARLAC

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 LIONS FOR LAMBS
3 ENCHANTED

STARMILLS
Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (045) 875-1927

1 FRED CLAUS
2 BATANES
3 WE OWN THE NIGHT
4 BOOGEYMAN 2
5 THE KINGDOM
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

BACOLOD
Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 HITMAN
2 THE KINGDOM
3 indieSine: 3 DAYS of DARKNESS
4 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
5 LUST CAUTION
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

ILOILO
Ticket Price, P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 HITMAN
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 BOOGEYMAN 2
4 GAME PLAN
5 MR. MAGORIUM's WONDER EMPORIUM
6 FRED CLAUS

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METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

From page 11

POWER PLANT CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

THE GOLDEN COMPASS PG13 11:50,2:20,4:50,7:20,9:50	ELIZABETH THE GOLDEN AGE PG13 1:00,3:30,6:00,8:30	THE GOLDEN COMPASS PG13 12:20,2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20
THE KINGDOM R13 12:30,2:55,5:20,7:45,10:10	DEATH PROOF R13 1:30,3:40,5:50,8:00	ELIZABETH THE GOLDEN AGE PG13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

① ELIZABETH
MTRCB: PG-13
1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30

② ELIZABETH
MTRCB: PG-13
12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

③ GOLDEN COMPASS
MTRCB: PG-13
1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30

④ THE KINGDOM
MTRCB: GP 2:00, 9:30
DEATH PROOF
MTRCB R-13 4:40, 7:05

PREMIERE THEATRE
ENCHANTED
MTRCB R-13
11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

NCCA
An Invitation to a
Mexican Film Screening
Embajada de Mexico

Supported by President's Social Fund

AL OTRO LADO (On The Other Side)
by Gustavo Loza

Everyone is invited FREE!

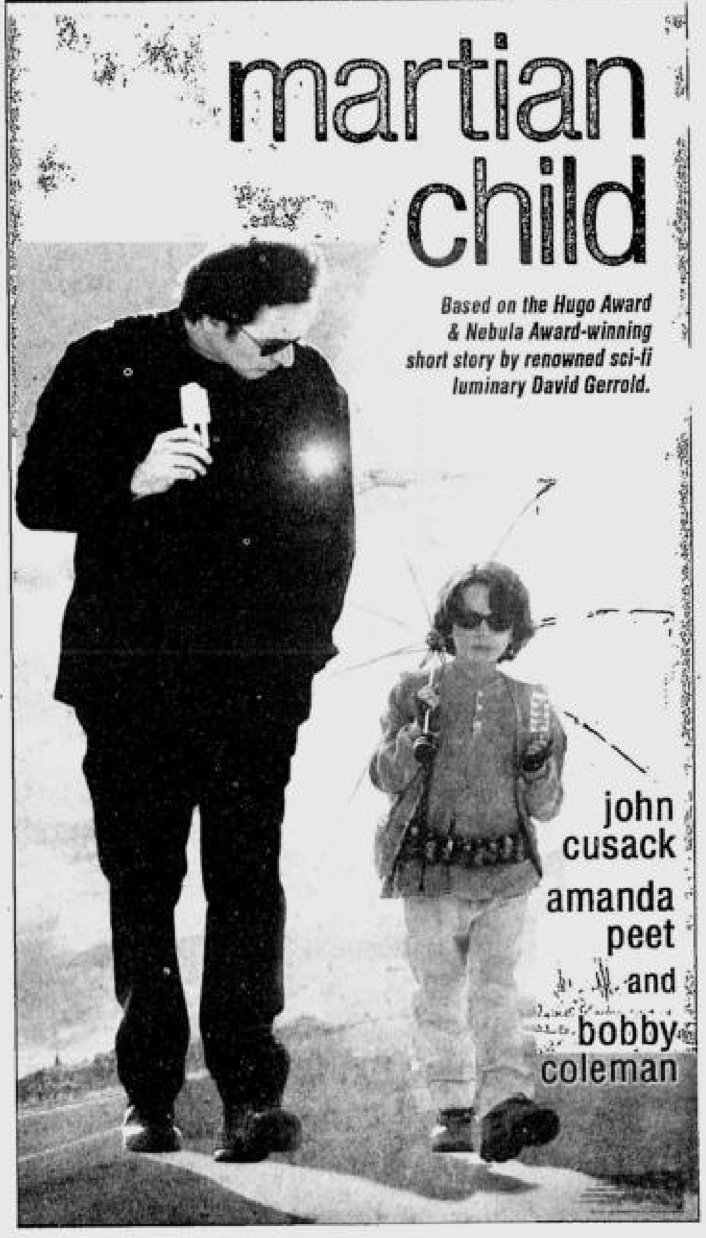
7:00 pm, December 19, 2007
Glorietta 4 Cinema 2, Ayala Center, Makati City

Mowelfund Film Institute

MTRCB RATING ▶ G ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED

OPENS DECEMBER 19

A science-fiction writer is about to get the biggest inspiration of his life... from a kid not of this world.



Based on the Hugo Award & Nebula Award-winning short story by renowned sci-fi luminary David Gerrold.

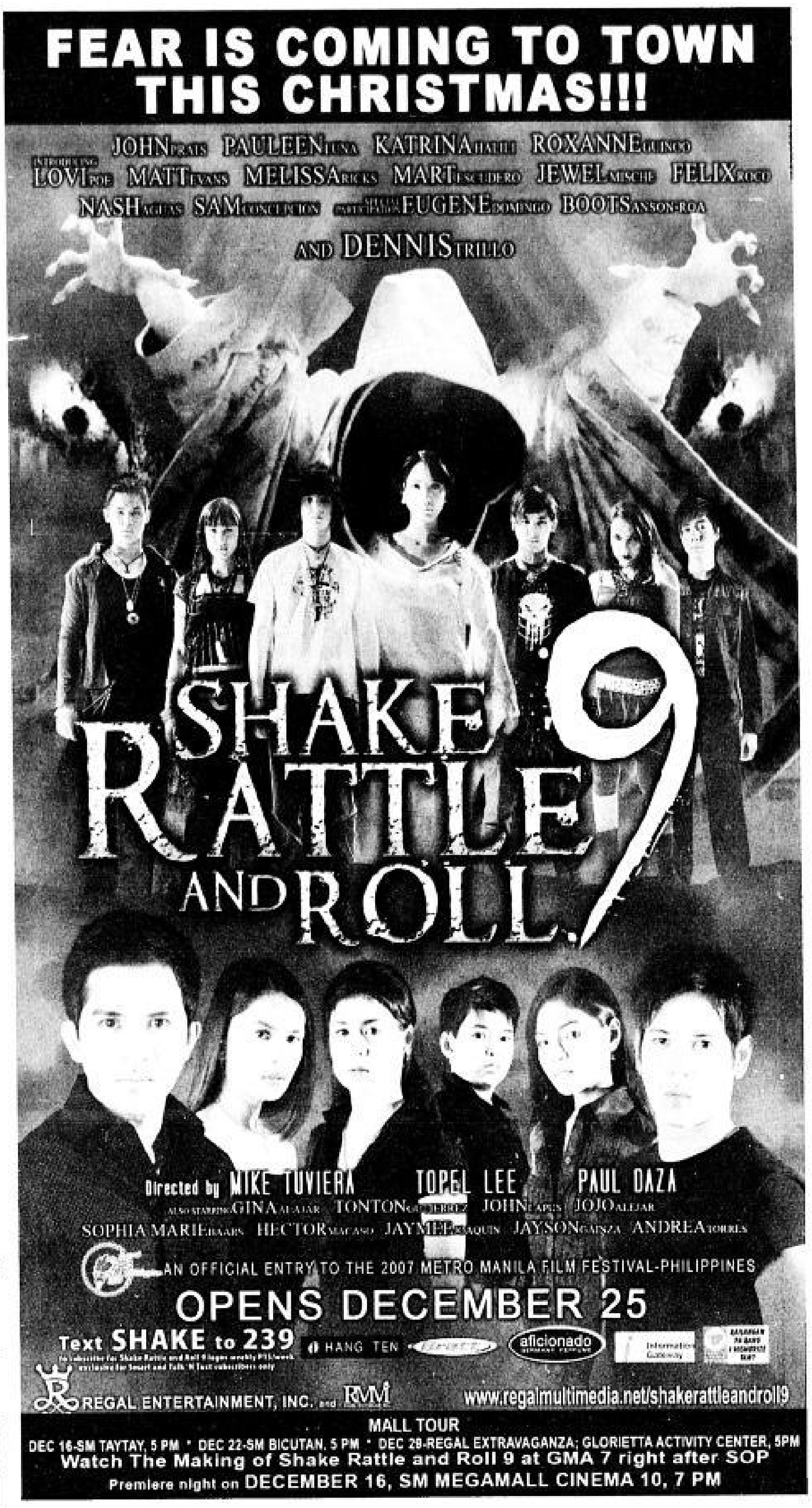
Katas ng Saudi

Stars Jinggoy Estrada, Lorna Tolentino, Liza Lorena, Vangie Labalan, Bayani Agbayani, Shaina Magdayao, Rayver Cruz, Ricky Davao, Julian Ejercito

Directed by Jose Javier Reyes

A typical Overseas Filipino Worker, Oscar (Estrada) returns to the Philippines for a holiday, only to find that his children have become strangers and his family, both immediate and extended, are dependent on his dollar earnings. Graded A by the Cinema Evaluation Board, this comedy-drama is commended for being an "exceptionally crafted film ... very touching, insightful, brimming with sensitivity. Very Filipino, very heartfelt." A CEB reviewer points out that the film "successfully tackles the plight of OFWs." The acting of the lead stars is similarly praised. "Jinggoy is definitely engaging and fits the role."

Maricel Soriano Eric Quizon
Marian Rivera Shaina Magdayao Yasmien Kurdi Eugene Domingo and Ms. Gloria Romero
Mark Herras Rayver Cruz Jiro Manio Bearwin Melly
Bahay Kubo
A Pinoy Mano Po!
A Film by Joel C. Lamangan, dgpi
Also Starring Isabella de Leon Sam Bumatay Rita Iringan
AN OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE 2007 METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL-PHILIPPINES
Text BAHAY to 239
PLDT TOUCH CARD GreenCross ALASKA Information Gateway
OPENS DECEMBER 25
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and RVM www.regalmultimedia.net/bahaykubo
MALL TOUR
DEC 16-SM TAYTAY, 5 PM * DEC 22-SM BICUTAN, 5 PM * DEC 29-REGAL EXTRAVAGANZA; GLORIETTA ACTIVITY CENTER, 5PM
Watch The Making of Bahay Kubo at GMA 7 right after SOP
Premiere night on DECEMBER 19, SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 10, 7 PM



FEAR IS COMING TO TOWN THIS CHRISTMAS!!!
JOHN PRATS PAULEEN LUNA KATRINA HALILI ROXANNE GUINOO
INTRODUCING LOVI POE MATT EVANS MELISSA RICKS MART ESCUDERO JEWEL MISCHE FELIX ROCO
NASH AGUAS SAM CONCEPCION SPECIAL PARTICIPATION EUGENE DOMINGO BOOTS ANSON-ROA
AND DENNIS TRILLO
SHAKE RATTLE AND ROLL 9
Directed by MIKE TUVIERA TOPEL LEE PAUL DAZA
ALSO STARRING GINA ALAJAR TONTON GUTIERREZ JOHN LAPUS JOJO ALEJAR
SOPHIA MARIE BAARS HECTOR MACASO JAYMEE JOAQUIN JAYSON GAINZA ANDREA TORRES
AN OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE 2007 METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL-PHILIPPINES
OPENS DECEMBER 25
Text SHAKE to 239
HANG TEN aficionado Information Gateway
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and RVM www.regalmultimedia.net/shakerattleandroll9
MALL TOUR
DEC 16-SM TAYTAY, 5 PM * DEC 22-SM BICUTAN, 5 PM * DEC 29-REGAL EXTRAVAGANZA; GLORIETTA ACTIVITY CENTER, 5PM
Watch The Making of Shake Rattle and Roll 9 at GMA 7 right after SOP
Premiere night on DECEMBER 16, SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 10, 7 PM

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Paskong Pinoy
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PINOY STYLE!
DECEMBER 18 TO 22 at MBC CCP area
SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:
Dec. 16 - 22 : MISA DE GALLO
Dec. 18 : PANUNULUYAN & GRAN BELEN
Joseph and Mary's search for the place where Baby Jesus will be born to culminate at CCP front lawn with 1,000 VOICE CHOIR
Dec. 18 - 22 : ILAW NG PASKO (LANTERN FLOAT PARADE)
HIMIG NG PASKO (CHILDREN'S CHOIR CONTEST)
TUGTOG NG PASKO (NIGHTLY BAND CONCERT):
Dec. 18 - 6 CYCLE MIND
Dec. 19 - KAMIKAZEE
Dec. 20 - PAROKYA NI EDGAR
Dec. 21 - SPONGE COLA
Dec. 22 - SANDWICH AND IMAGO
Plus! BARATILLO NG PASKO Christmas Bazaars at Sotto Street from Dec. 16!
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more Energy mas Happy MULTIVITAMINS ENERVON MORE ENERGY MAS HAPPY
PAMBATA Carbocisteine Solmux ANG GAMOT NA MAY IBUBUGA
TANDUAY T5 HABANG TUMATAGAL LALONG SUMASARAPI
IMAGE ONE MULTIMEDIA CORPORATION

Mau…

From page 11

explained.

And although the program wasn't meant as a weight-loss regimen, "Mau lost seven pounds in two weeks," Santos quipped.

Zuñiga, who worked with Marcelo during the "Philippine Idol" run on ABC 5 last year, told the INQUIRER that he had given the RP bet "basic skills" in classical and pop music.

"One is placement," he said. "That would help her reach high notes effortlessly."

Zuñiga described Marcelo "as painfully shy."

'A true mezzo-soprano'

Marcelo's voice is her biggest asset, Santos and Zuñiga agreed.

Santos described Marcelo as "a true mezzo-soprano, with a wide range and powerful resonance. Very few singers have warm head tones—Mau doesn't screech or wail."

Santos said he gave Marcelo one tip: "Just sing *for* and not sing *to* the audience."

The Rivermaya band, with its new vocalist Jayson Fernandez, is another Pinoy talent that's raring to rock Jakarta on the "Asian Idol" finals tonight, to be aired via satellite on ABC 5, from 9 p.m. to 12 midnight.

Other guest performers include "American Idol" Taylor Hicks and "Australian Idol" Guy Sebastian.

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here comes Santa Claus!
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687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 ENCHANTED
2:35, 5:15, 7:55, 10:35
G

2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2:40, 5:20, 8:00, 10:35
PG-13

3 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE
2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30
PG-13

4 THE KINGDOM
3:20, 8:05
R-13

GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
5:40,10:30
R-13

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

"IN THE TRADITION OF *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* AND *HARRY POTTER*, *THE GOLDEN COMPASS* TAKES ITS PLACE AMONGST THE GREAT FANTASY FILMS OF ALL TIME." – *Ben Lyons / E!*

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2ND WEEK
THE GOLDEN COMPASS
FROM THE PRODUCER OF "THE LORD OF THE RINGS"

GRADED BY THE CINEMA EVALUATION BOARD A
MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

UUWI NA SI DADDY!

OPENS DECEMBER 25

MAVERICK

PILIPINAS
PASAPORTE

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

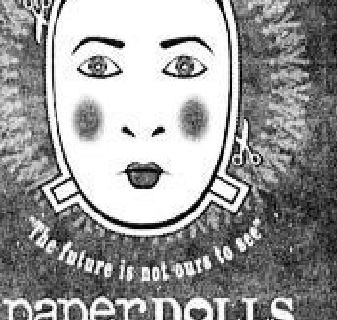
GLORIETTA 1	1 CATACOMB	2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	3 HOOD OF HORROR	4 HITMAN
GLORIETTA 4	1 ENCHANTED	2 THE KINGDOM	3 THX ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 GONE BABY GONE	5 BATANES	6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	7 DEATH PROOF
GREENBELT 1	1 PAPER DOLLS	2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS		
GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 DEATH PROOF GUARANTEED SEATS	4 GONE BABY GONE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 EASTERN PROMISES GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN COMPASS		
	3 DEATH PROOF	4 CATACOMB	5 THE KINGDOM	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 THE GAME PLAN	3 FRED CLAUS	4 EASTERN PROMISES
MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 DEATH PROOF		
	3 HOOD OF HORROR	4 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE	5 CATACOMB	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 BATANES	2 DEATH PROOF	3 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HOOD OF HORROR GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 ENCHANTED	6 CATACOMB	7 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	

AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala Malls

glorietta	Stargazing feat. the stars of SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO December 16; 6pm; Glorietta Activity Center
GREENBELT	Holiday Opera Concert December 21; 7pm; Greenbelt 3 Park
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Regine Velasquez Live! December 16; 6pm; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Spongebob Holiday Show December 16; 11am to 3pm; Paseos
MARKET! MARKET!	The Philippine Star Balikbayan Fair December 14 to 16; Activity Center and Central Plaza
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents FIDDLER ON THE ROOF November 9 - December 16, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	WATER: THE MEDIUM by Juvenal Sanso November 24 to January 13, 2008; Ground Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Christmas Chorale featuring Pops Fernandez and The UP Cherubim and Seraphim December 16; 6pm; Activity Center FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-938, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31


Not a man. Not a woman. Not a person.
"The future is not ours to see"

paperDOLLS
A Film by Tomer Heymann

The Embassy of Israel Manila in cooperation with Ayala Malls Cinemas presents
paperDOLLS
A Documentary film by Tomer Heymann
This film showing is dedicated
in memory of Sally Camatoy, one of the main leads,
who was found dead on the streets of Dubai.
Portion of the proceeds will go to Sally Camatoy family.
DECEMBER 12-18, 2007
GREENBELT 1 CINEMA
For screening schedules, please call: 729-7777
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

MASXMAS sa ABS-CBN
See your favorite ABS-CBN Stars on Sunday, December 16, at the Glorietta Activity Center.
Show starts at 1PM

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

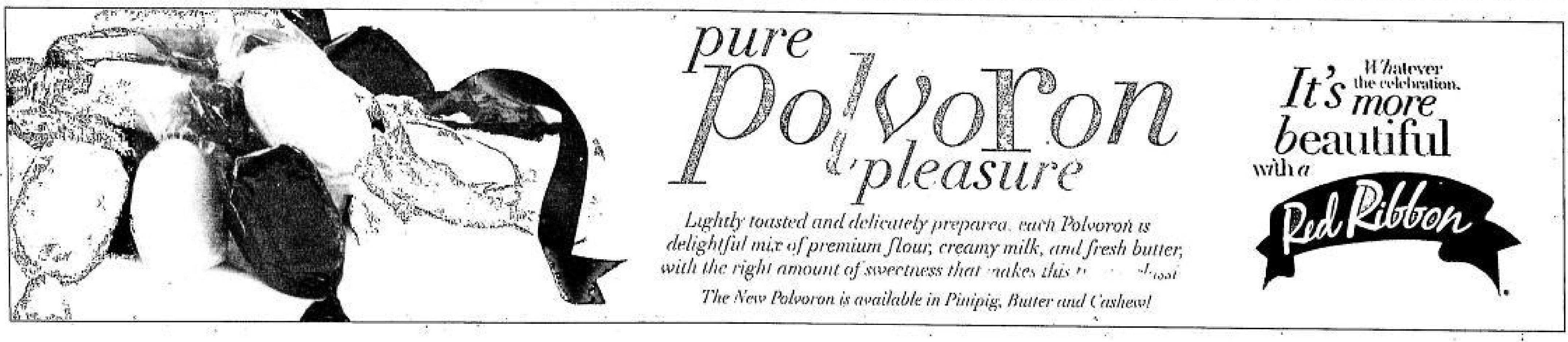
ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

CHEER FACTOR

Mascot parade today

"KRISMASKOT 2007," A PARADE OF FAvorite mascots, is set today, 3-6 p.m. from UN Avenue on Roxas Blvd., to Baywalk.


pure Polvoron pleasure
Lightly toasted and delicately preparea, each Polvoron is delightful mix of premium flour, creamy milk, and fresh butter, with the right amount of sweetness that makes this [illegible]
The New Polvoron is available in Pinipig, Butter and Cashew!
Whatever the celebration. It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

Jenine Desiderio as Donna Summer

By Pocholo Concepcion

IN THE MID-1970s, DISCO MUSIC WAS all the rage, that it was almost as popular as punk and heavy metal. But by the end of the decade, it had become passé.

Yet its influence on synth-pop, hip hop and house/techno is too obvious to ignore. In recent years, Madonna and many R&B artists have not stopped exploiting disco's primal dance rhythms.

A Filipino-Canadian, writer-director-choreographer Leandro Mendez, is mounting the stage musical "Queen of Disco: The Musical Journey of Donna Summer" as a tribute to the era and its greatest star. It will premiere on Dec. 31, 8 p.m. at Onstage Greenbelt 1, with Jenine Desiderio as Summer.

Jenine, who was in the original cast of "Miss Saigon" at West End, was too young to have experienced Manila's disco night life. But she remembers how her sisters loved the music that later rubbed off on her.

TAKE FIVE

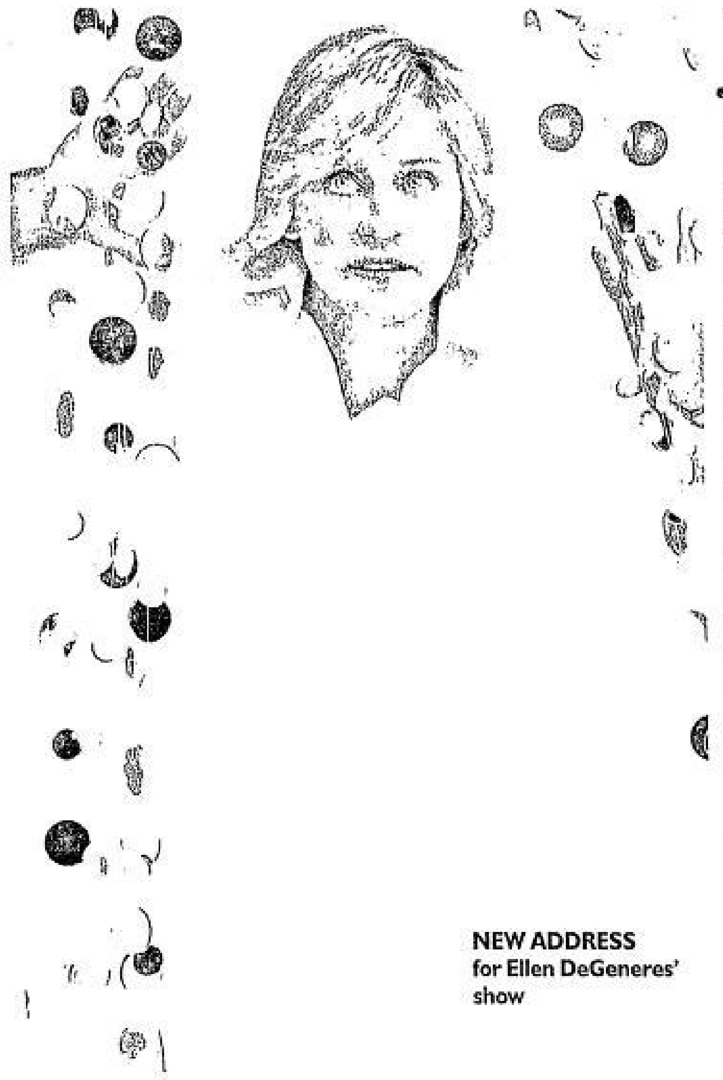
Where were you, and what were you doing at the height of the disco era?

I just started going to school at the time. My mom had me when she was already in her 40s. My sisters, who were in their late teens and early 20s, were always playing music and dancing in our living room. They taught me the latest dance steps even if I was just a kid. I felt so sad when they'd go disco-dancing because they couldn't take me with them.

What was good and bad about those years?

My mom fell ill with cancer. Her battle was swift; it was finished in less than a year. I was only six years old. It was probably our way of coping with her death that we turned to music to feel good. Happy music.

JENINE/ J3



NEW ADDRESS for Ellen DeGeneres' show

Solar shows for free

ON JANUARY 1, 2008, THREE of Solar Entertainment's most popular channels—C/S, ETC and 2nd Avenue—will be moving to non-cable TV.

The three channels will still be available on major cable systems, according to a press statement, which didn't indicate a cutoff date. Meantime, the statement added, the relocation simply means wider reach—and free—for their Philippine followers "24 hours a day, seven days a week."

C/S on RPN 9

C/S will be seen on RPN 9. Fans of "Heroes," "24," and "Prison Break" can also expect new titles, including "Bionic Woman," "Chuck," "Terminator: The Sarah Conner Chronicles," "Burn Notice," and "Women's Murder Club."

ETC on SBN 21

ETC will be seen on UHF SBN 21. It will show the latest seasons of "America's Next Top Model," "Project Runway," plus the latest Hollywood news through "E! News" and "The Daily Ten." New additions are "Gossip Girl," "The Late Show with David Letterman," and the "CBS Evening News" with Katie Couric.

2nd Ave. on RJTV 29

2nd Avenue will have a new address in UHF RJTV 29. Shows include the "Ellen DeGeneres Show," "Nip/Tuck" and "Men in Trees." Premiering are "Mad Men," "Top Design," and "Lipstick Jungle."

MTRCB RATING R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.
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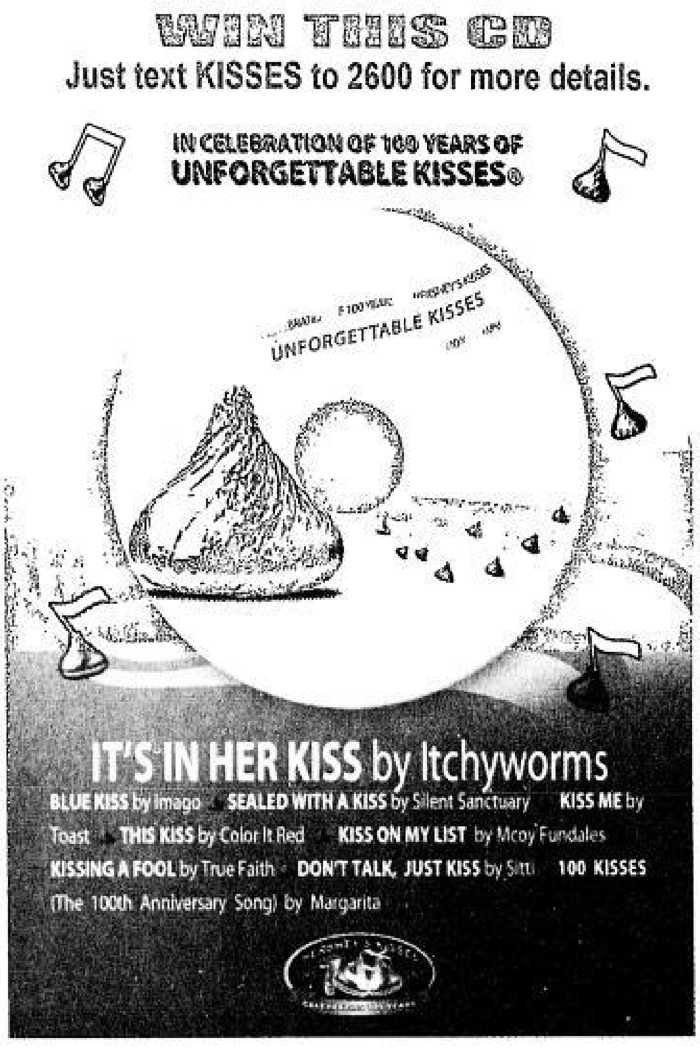
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KATE BLANCHETT
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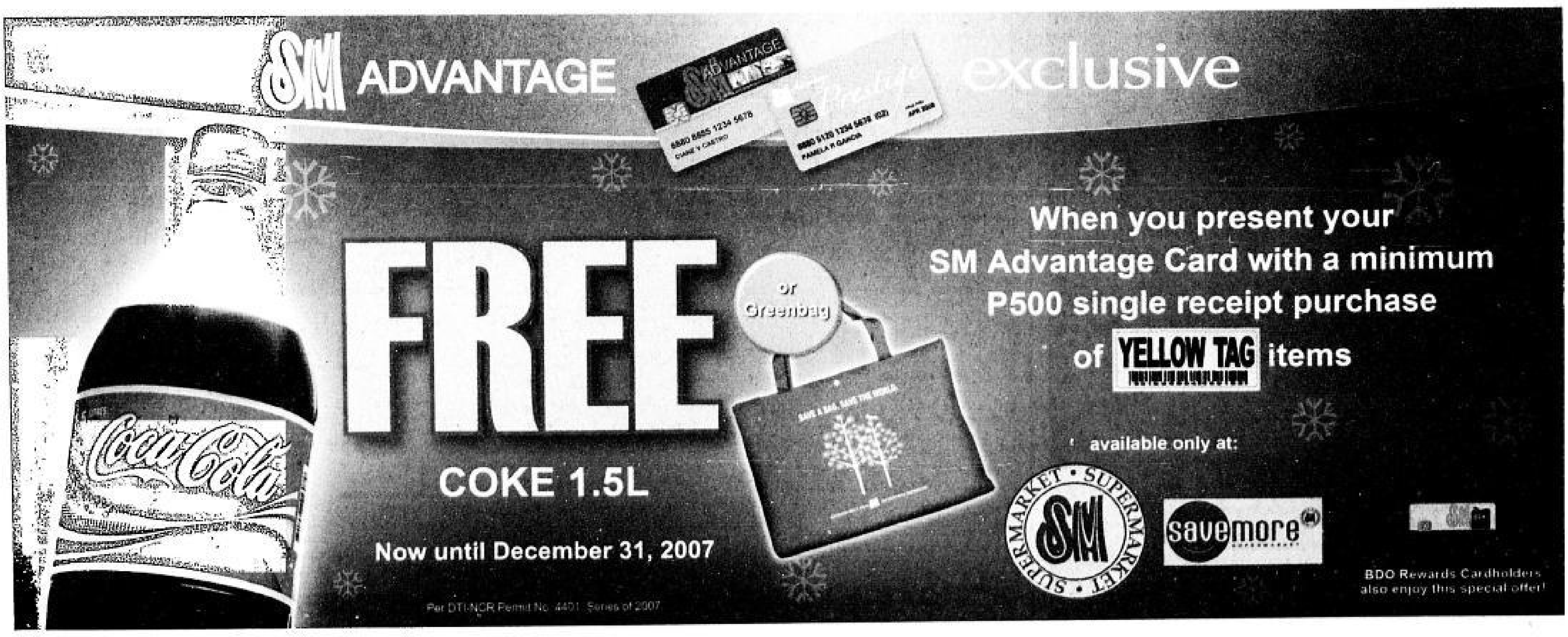
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4401 Series of 2007

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CINEMA 1 CATACOMBS
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6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
R-13

CINEMA 2 THE KINGDOM
11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40
6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35
R-13

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CINEMA 3 DEATHPROOF
11:50 , 2:05 , 4:20
6:35 , 8:50
R-13

CINEMA 4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
11:15 , 2:00 , 4:40
7:20 , 10:00
PG-13

CINEMA 5 ELIZABETH
11:15 , 2:10 , 5:00
7:50 , 10:35
PG - 13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

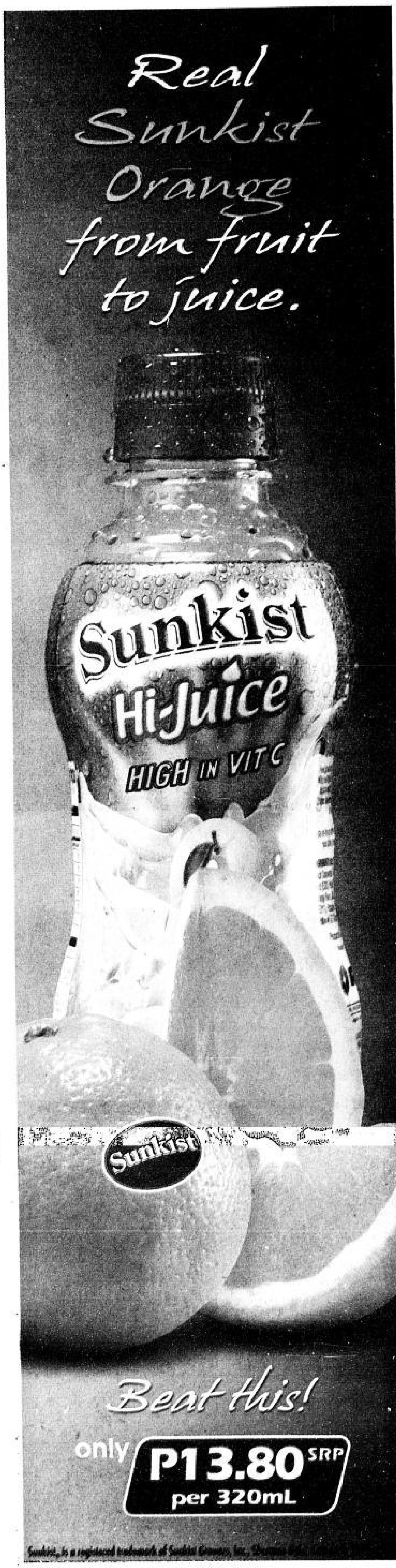
MUSIC MUSEUM

December 15 , 2007	The Company	8:00 PM
December 19 , 2007	Pilita Corales , Dulce , Malu Barry	8:30 PM
December 28 , 2007	Pooh	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

December 20, 2007	Jed Madela	8:00 PM
December 28 & 29 , 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116



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12:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m.

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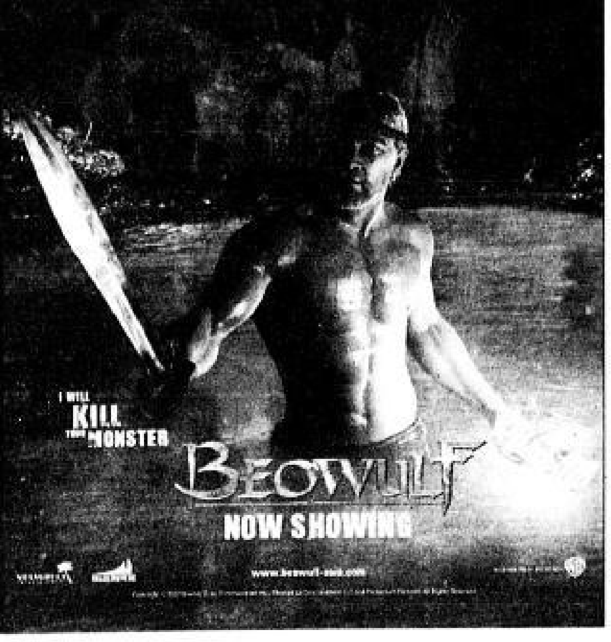

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IMAX
POLAR EXPRESS 3D
2:30 PM • 4:30 PM • 7:00 PM • 9:30 PM
BEOWULF 3D
11:30 AM • 12:00 NN
1 ELIZABETH
2 CATACOMBS
3 DEATH PROOF
4 BATANES
5 PASUKOB
6 SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
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2 ENCHANTED
3 HITMAN
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
5 PASUKOB
6 ELIZABETH
7 GOLDEN COMPASS
8 BATANES
9 CATACOMBS
10 DEATH PROOF
11 ONE MORE CHANCE
12 THE KINGDOM

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 ELIZABETH
2 BEOWULF
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 SHIRI/CARTOON NETWORK
6 BATANES
7 ENCHANTED
8 CATACOMBS
9 HITMAN
10 PASUKOB
11 DEATH PROOF
12 HOOD OF HORROR

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 HITMAN
2 ENCHANTED
3 PASUKOB
4 RESERVED
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 SHIRI
7 GOLDEN COMPASS
8 BATANES
9 BEOWULF
10 THE KINGDOM
11 DEATH PROOF
12 CARTOON NETWORK/ EASTERN PROMISES

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 DEATH PROOF
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 PASUKOB
4 BATANES

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 DEATH PROOF
2 ELIZABETH
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 CARTOON NETWORK/ PASUKOB
5 CATACOMBS
6 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 BATANES
2 DEATH PROOF
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 PASUKOB

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 ELIZABETH
5 PASUKOB
6 DEATH PROOF
7 SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
8 CATACOMBS
9 HOOD OF HORROR

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 DEATH PROOF
3 ELIZABETH
4 PASUKOB
5 BATANES
6 BEOWULF
7 ONE MORE CHANCE
8 CARTOON NETWORK/ SHIRI
9 THE KINGDOM
10 EASTERN PROMISES

NOW OPEN
SM SUPERCENTER MUNTINLUPA 862 5693
1 BATANES
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS.
3 ELIZABETH
4 PASUKOB

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 CATACOMBS
3 SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
4 BATANES
5 DEATH PROOF
6 ELIZABETH
7 ONE MORE CHANCE
8 THE KINGDOM
9 PASUKOB
10 BEOWULF
11 HITMAN
12 ENCHANTED

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 RESERVED

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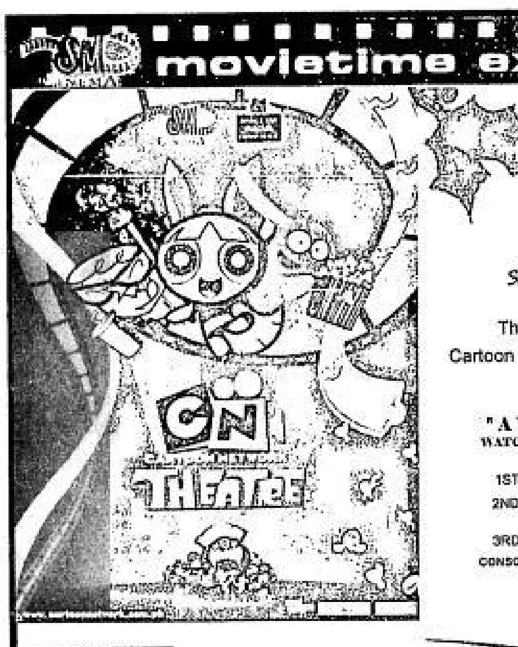

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2 ENCHANTED
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 BATANES
6 PASUKOB
7 SHIRI
8 EASTERN PROMISES

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 PASUKOB
3 BATANES
4 HITMAN

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3180
1 BATANES
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE GAME PLAN
3 PASUKOB
4 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

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1 PASUKOB
2 BATANES
3 GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2 THE GAMEPLAN
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 HITMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637081-88
1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
3 THE KINGDOM
4 VHAGETS
5 FRED CLAUSE/ BATANES
6 PASUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 PASUKOB/ LIONS FOR LAMBS
2 THE GAMEPLAN
3 HITMAN
4 GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 HITMAN
2 SHIRI
3 THE GAME PLAN
4 GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE KINGDOM
3 THE GAMEPLAN
4 BOOGEYMAN 2/ CARTOON NETWORK
5 PASUKOB
6 FRED CLAUSE/ BATANES

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 HITMAN
2 PASUKOB
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE GAMEPLAN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 HITMAN
2 THE GAMEPLAN
3 SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
4 WEDDING DAZE
5 THE KINGDOM
6 GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884
1 THE KINGDOM
2 PASUKOB
3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4 GOLDEN COMPASS

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 NANNY DIARIES
2 RESERVED
3 SHIRI
4 GOLDEN COMPASS
5 HITMAN
6 THE GAMEPLAN
7 RESERVED
8 FRED CLAUSE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 EASTERN PROMISES
2 FRED CLAUSE
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE GAMEPLAN
5 CARTOON NETWORK/ EL CANTANTE
6 VHAGETS
7 UNREST
8 SHIRI

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 HITMAN
2 THE KINGDOM
3 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

FEEDBACK

Audacious, vulnerable

From Cristy Gozon, sent to Ruben Nepales:

Cate Blanchett portraying a man came as no surprise to me.

In her movie "Elizabeth," her air of royalty was a combination of audacity and vulnerability.

One line from that film struck me the hardest. She said, "If I were to choose, I would choose the heart of a man." And she did just that towards the end of the story from her own point of view.

As for her portraying Bob Dylan—I think that, physically, she *does* resemble him. I just don't know if she can sing like him, though.

Celebs' right to privacy

Also from Cristy Gozon, sent to Ruben Nepales:

All people have the right to privacy, regardless of one's status in life. .

That celebrities crave privacy is understandable—they do so for a very good reason: equanimity.

They maybe regarded (sadly) as public properties, but they have personal lives to lead, secrets to keep, just like the rest of us.

We should all respect this.

If Daniel Craig seemed to be circumspect about certain questions, I think it's all right.

Actually, I even find that sexy, because if he tells all, the excitement surrounding him will wane all too soon (and that's goodbye for his Bond).

It's an advantage for him, leaving his fans hanging about certain aspects of his personality.

We continue to want to uncover him as a person as we witness his progress as an actor.

My favorites

From Ross G. Bolano of Roxas City, sent to Ruben Nepales:

I read with much interest your column of Nov. 25, 2007, in which you wrote about Seal and mentioning our own pop diva, Kuh Ledesma, to him.

Kuh and Seal are my two most favorite artists. You are lucky; you've heard Kuh sing "Love's Divine."

I have yet to hear her sing that song. It is my fervent wish that she record it someday soon.

Thank you for mentioning Kuh to Seal. He is Kuh's favorite male singer, in case you were not aware of it. She's been very vocal about her admiration of him, even mentioning him in some of her interviews.

More power to you.

JENINE Desiderio

Jenine Desiderio...

From page J1

Disco music!

How do you regard disco as a music form?
Considering the technical limitations of the '70s as compared to the plethora of options we have nowadays with digital technology, I'd say disco music with its driving beat was so cool then. If you actually dissect the songs, you'll find that there's a lot of good melody and structure in them and the vocals were well performed without much technical enhancement.

What was your impression then of Donna Summer and how did you relate to her?
It was only when I started to sing in my teenage years that I truly appreciated her work and talent. When I tried singing her songs, I found them so challenging. My favorite piece then was "McArthur's Park," which I sang every single time I'd go to auditions and compete in singing contests. I felt it was my lucky song. If bold stars have their magic *kamison*, "McArthur's Park" then was my magic song.

How has your impression changed, after studying details of her life in "Queen of Disco"?
When I read her biographies, she came alive to me as a person. More than just the soulful voice we hear in her songs, more than just the sensual facade she came to be known for, she also had her own struggles. Despite her string of hits, she also had her share of doubts and experimentation with life until she decided to turn to God. *Ay! Parang ako!* Even though I only have one hit to my name! *Ano nga 'yun?* Kidding aside, I've also learned to let go and let God into my life.

What can the audience gain from watching this stage musical?
They will surely have a good time listening to her hits and getting revved up to the party-like atmosphere. They will also appreciate the unusual visual treatment of the material. Enjoy *na sila*, they did *pa* their bit for charity.

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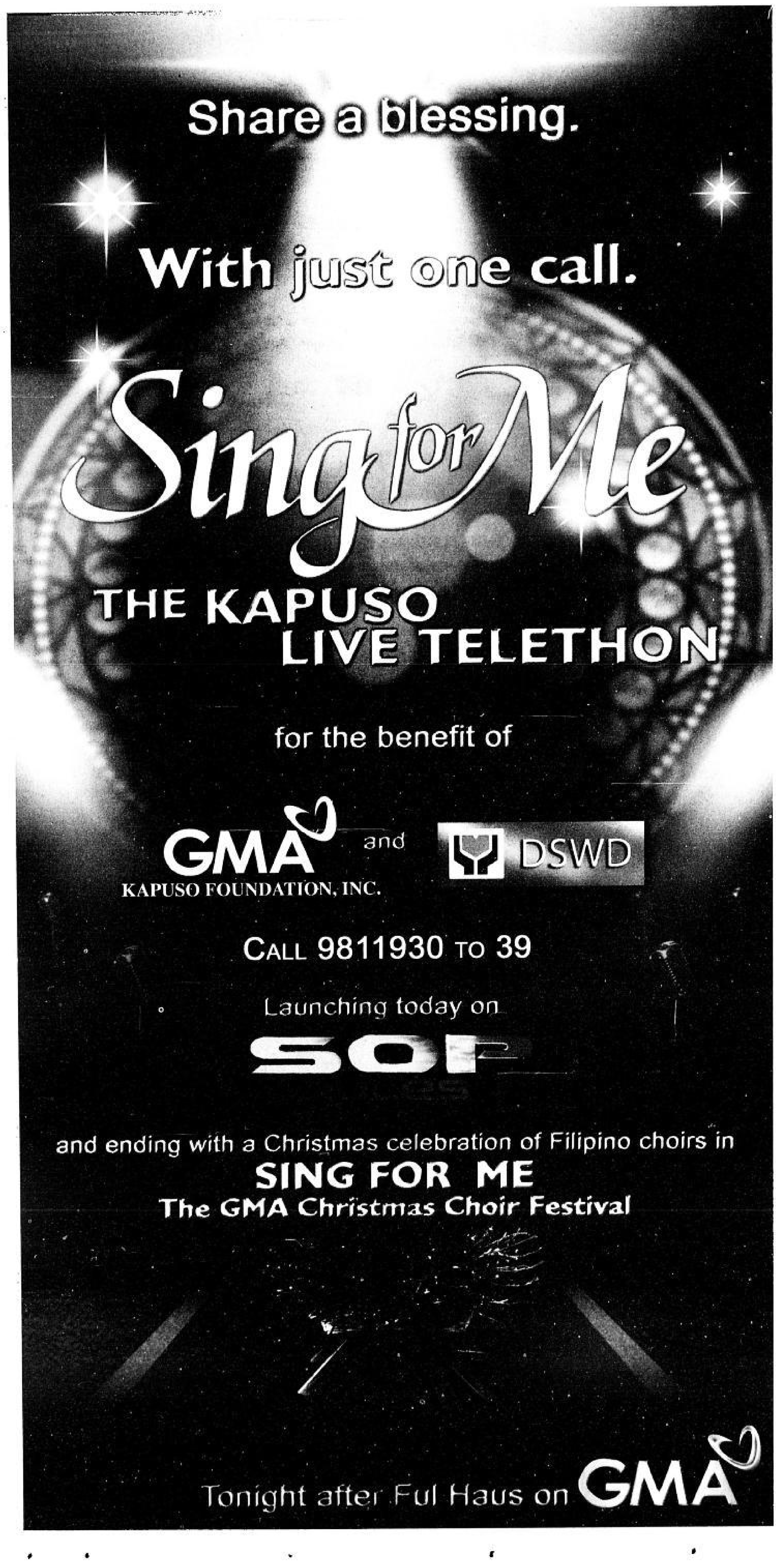
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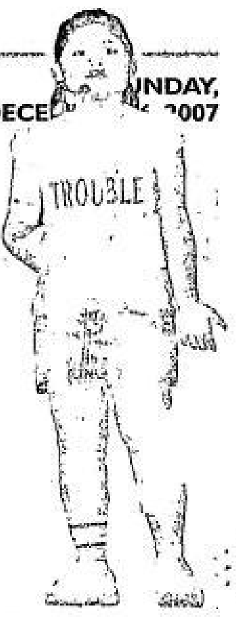
KID FIT

Cartoon Network awardees



KRISTEN Faith S. Lagrimas, Wild Card winner

CARTOON NETwork recently honored the winners of its CN Awards of Excellence 2007 search in ceremonies held at SM Mall of Asia's Center Stage.

The awardees were: Deanne May G. Igaya from Torres High School, Singing; Campus Crew from Gen. Pio del Pilar National High School, Dancing; and Kristen Faith S. Lagrimas from Makati Elementary School, Wild Card category.

Joining the star kids in the culmination of the search were singer-actress Karylle, dance champion Rodjun Cruz, comedian Bearwin Meily and actress Jolina Magdangal, who hosted the affair.

'Ratatouille' on video

Viva Video and Astroplus have released the DVD and VCD version of Disney-Pixar's "Ratatouille."

The movie tells the story of Remy (voiced by Paton Oswalt), a rat with an incredible sense of smell whose greatest ambition is to take after France's deceased top chef, Auguste Gusteau (Brad Garret).

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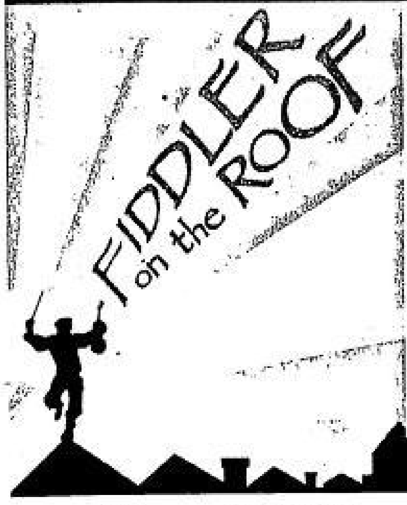

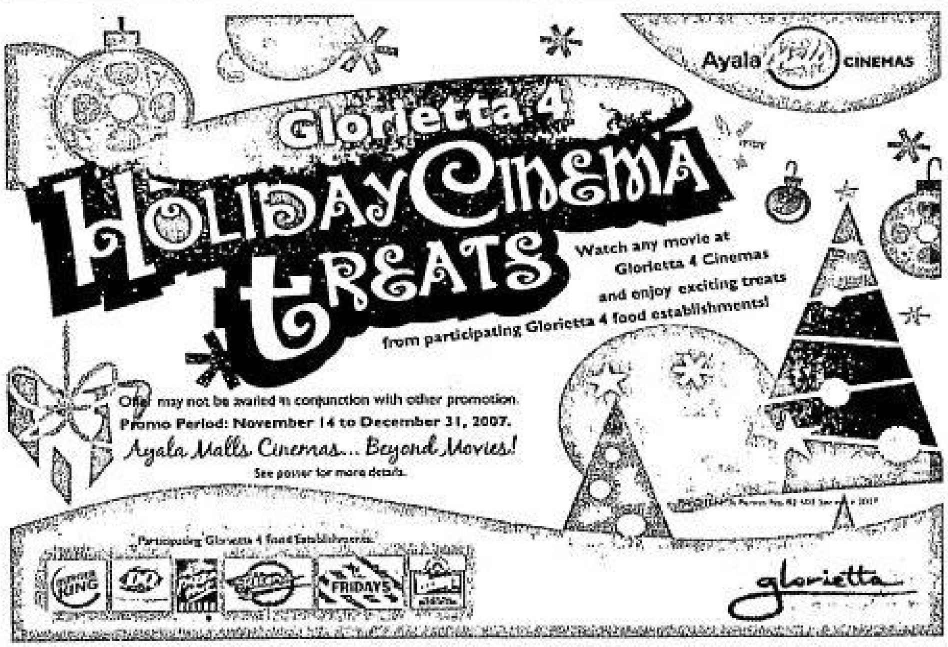

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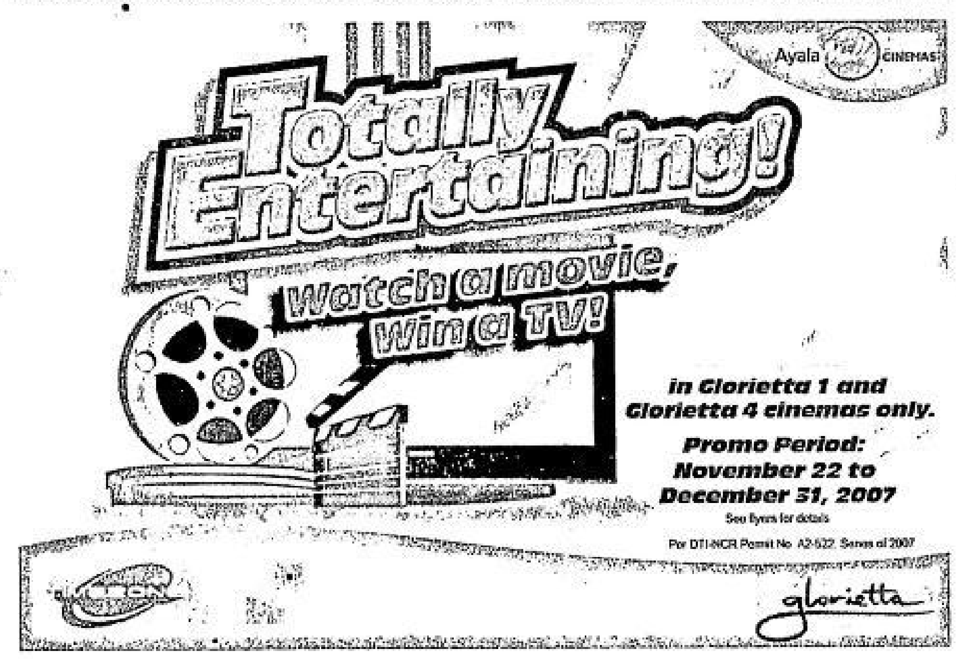
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BEOWULF 2:25 | 7:05	ONE MORE CHANCE 12:45 | 3:40 6:35 | 9:30	THE KINGDOM 12:10 | 2:30 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30	BATANES 1:15 | 4:00 6:45 | 9:30 PASUKOB 12:10 | 4:50 | 9:30	ENCHANTED 1:45 | 4:20 6:55 | 9:30

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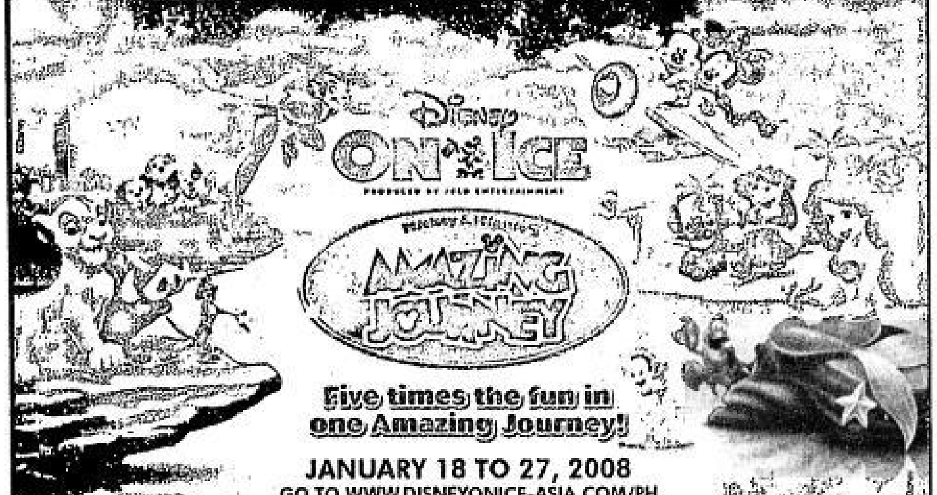

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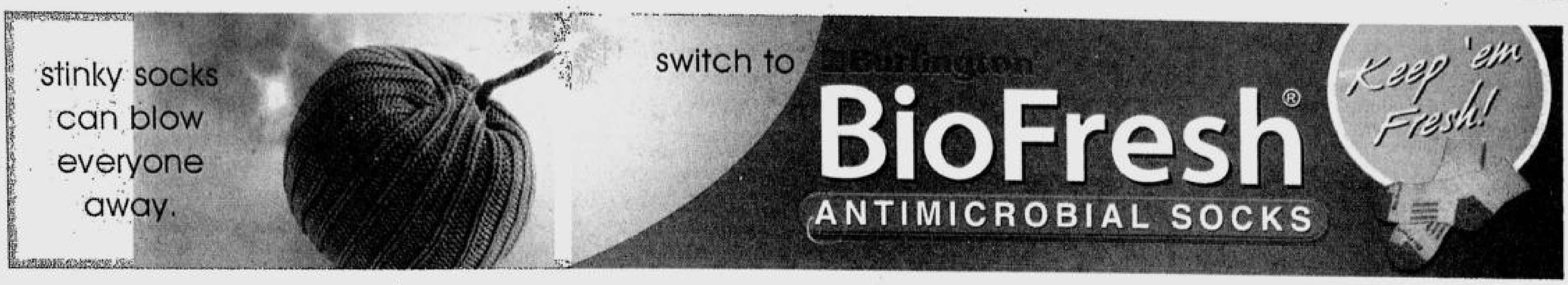
DID YOU KNOW...

THIS WEEK (Dec. 16-22) IN SHOW BIZ HISTORY: SHIRLEY TEMPLE, 5, signed up with Fox (1933); Disney released "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," its first full-length animated film in color ('37); singer Bobby Darin, 37, died following heart surgery ('73); "The Simpsons" debutted on Fox ('89); and "Titanic" opened ('97). *AP*



Chin-Chin publishes mom's memoir

AN ATMOSPHERE OF WARMTH AND tranquility filled A Different Bookstore in Serendra on Dec. 8 as actress-environmentalist Chin-Chin Gutierrez unveiled a memorial of love to her late mother.

Cecilia Arnaldo Gutierrez's memoir, "Fingerprint of an Angel: Golden Secrets of Eternal Love," was launched.

It's been almost a year—five days before Christmas, 2006—since Chin-Chin's family home was gutted by fire. The physical and emotional trauma brought about by the mishap aggravated the condition of Cecilia, who was already gravely ill with diabetes at the time. She died 23 days later, leaving behind two manuscripts that chronicled her life story. Her "adventures of the inner life" comprise the book, independently published by Chin-Chin.

The book launch began with an ecumenical invocation led by representatives of various faiths, followed by video presentations depicting the life of Cecilia, a former Franciscan nun turned painter, mother, and "angelologist." To end the program, Chin-Chin regaled the audience with "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" which, she said, she often sang to her sick mom.

Present at the launch was Chin-Chin's US-based brother Noni, colleagues from the movie industry, priests and nuns from different congregations, and friends.

The book is now available at all branches of A Different Bookstore.

No big stars in winning film

By Marinel R. Cruz

"IF I WERE RYAN PASTOR, I'D SHOW the documentary to anyone who'd care to watch. I'd make money out of it and then disappear," said first-time full-length feature filmmaker Jerrold Tarog.

Tarog's film, "Confessional," tells the story of a small-time filmmaker (Pastor) who goes to Cebu to document the Sinulog Festival, but instead stumbles upon a retired politician willing to confess the crimes he had committed while in office.

The experimental film is Tarog's collaborative effort with Ruel Bahis Antipuesto. It won the biggest number of awards—including Best Picture and Best Director—in the recently concluded Cinema One Originals Digital Film Festival. Tarog, 30, also won for Best Sound, Best Screenplay and Best Editing.

Tarog is better known in the industry as a musical director, having earned nominations from the prestigious Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino for his work in "Kubrador," "Kaleldo" and "Manoro."

In July, Tarog received his Best Musical Score award from the Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival for "Kadin." His short film, "Carpool," won first prize at the 19th Cultural Center of Philippines Awards for Alternative Film and Video.

Tarog sat down with members of the entertainment press shortly after the screening of "Confessional" at the ABS-CBN offices.

TAKE FIVE

JERROLD Tarog JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

If you had a bigger budget, would you have hired known actors for this film?

No. That would have destroyed the illusion that this is a documentary about real people. Except for the mayor, (Publio Briones III), who had had a stint in theater, all the cast members were first-time actors.

How was the shift, for you, from musical scoring to directing?

I've directed a number of short films before. I direct and make music for films simultaneously.

Who among our local filmmakers do you look up to?

I admire independent filmmakers for their integrity. I like the works of Jon Torres. I also like the works of American filmmaker Rebecca Miller. She made "Personal Velocity." She is the daughter of playwright Arthur Miller (and photographer Inge Morath).

I also like a number of Mexican directors.

Did you have any inkling that "Confessional" would win these awards for you?

No, but I had hoped to win.

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LBC –"Ang Hari ng Padala", gets even busier this Christmas season to make sure higher volumes of deliveries are made on time, all the time. With over 650 branches nationwide, and offices in Asia, the US and Canada, LBC gets ready to meet the Pinoy holiday rush with its fast-moving and cut-rate delivery service—with a lot of help coming from its communications partner, Sun Cellular.

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ANNE Curtis

RUSHES SUNDAY

IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHY RUmors about Sexy Actress and Married Celebrity refuse to die down, it could be because of pure and simple carelessness.

According to a spy, SA called up her paramour but, instead of his number, she dialed that of the name next to MC's in her cell phone directory.

Unfortunately, MC has the same name as the *reporter* who inadvertently received the midnight call.

"She called me sweetheart," said the stunned reporter.

Clue: Dial M for... "Mali 'yan, Manash!"

Love nest hunting

The same SA was spotted house-hunting in a posh village in the suburbs.

Nothing wrong with that. Except that MC who's being linked to SA lives nearby.

So was she hunting for a house or a love nest?

Tree hunting

Controversial Actress was renovating her palatial home and felt the need for a little landscaping.

She ordered exotic trees from abroad for her garden.

When the huge trees arrived, CA found them unappealing and had them shipped back to... wherever they came from.

Angel hunting

CA's Socialite Namesake has the same habit.

SN's husband, Mr. Billionaire, was surveying the front lawn one night and noticed an old tree missing.

Turned out, SN had the hapless tree moved to the backyard. Mmm, finicky.

Once, we hear, SN ordered life-size angel figures for the holidays. When the angels arrived, she was horrified. "They're fat!" she exclaimed. Back to the shop the angels flew.

Comeback interruptus

Annabelle Rama has backed out of her original comeback bid, the Metro Manila Film Fest entry "Desperadas."

In her stead, comedienne Nova Villa was tapped to play the role of mom to the film's titular heroines.

The latest word is that Rama will make her comeback in another comedy, "Monster Mom," directed by **Jose Javier Reyes**. We say, good call.

Battling for moolah

Feisty Actress is on the warpath again.

After confirming her husband's philandering ways, she decided to cut him off her life — completely.

Now, a battle for assets is ongoing.

Exasperated, FA is threatening to reveal the source of her husband's wealth, saying, "The name of his company bears the initials of a disgraced politician."

Coincidental remake

A film fest entry has the same ending as an old Sampaguita movie starring **Rosa Mia**.

The vintage flick is coincidentally titled "Yaya Maria," said a source.

Coincidentally times two! Because that's also the nickname of one of the stars of the MMFF entry, noted a show biz insider.

* * *

Top of the tabloids

The top show biz stories in local tabloids this week. (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

- **Aiko Melendez**, *may ka*-holding hands *habang namamasyal sa* Hong Kong. (*Kay bilis namang...*)
- BF *ni* Maxene, *ibinuking ni* **Francis Magalona**. (Father knows best.)
- **Mariel Rodriguez**, *apektado sa malandi isyu.*
- May-December affair *nina* Dr. **Vicky Belo** *at* BF, *iniintriga.* (Too late.)
- **Anne Curtis**, *nagpa-tapyas ng* lips.
- **Katrina Halili**, *hawak ng isang mayamang tibo?*
- Bagong Viva Hot Babes member, *napagkamalang tibo.* (Do we have a new word of the week?)

To baby or not

- **Regine Velasquez**, *gusto nang magbuntis.*
- **Katherine Luna**, *aanakan ulit.* (Anything missing in this sentence?)
- **Maureen Larrazabal**, *hindi natatakot tumandang dalaga.* (*Dalaga*, meaning virgin, or unmarried?)
- **Derek Ramsay** *walang balak pakasalan si* Angelica. (*Di kaya kasal na sila?*)

Game's not over

- Pirates enjoying conflict between **Edu, Bong**? (For sure.)
- Edu *dapat nang imbestigahan sa Senado ni* Sen. Bong.
- Edu *hirap patawarin si* Bong.
- Edu: *"Hindi ako ipokrito."*
- *Putak nang putak ni* Edu, *ayaw patulan ni* Bong.
- Sen. Bong: *Edu, posibleng matanggal sa* OMB.
- Bong *ginamit ang impluwensiya?*
- Bong willing *na magka-ayos sila ni* Edu.
- Bong: Edu not ready for reconciliation.
- **Cesar Montano**, *papalit kay* Edu *sa* OMB. (This was where it was headed, all this time?)

Show... money

- Anak *ni* **Jolo Revilla**, *palahingi ng pera.* (He's what, 3 years old? *May intriga na?*)
- *Sa bagong nilipatang bahay...*Kris Aquino *at* James Yap, *pinagtalunan ang ilaw.* (Wattage, installation or Meralco bill?)
- **Valerie Concepcion**, *inaway ang ama ng anak dahil 'di nagbibigay ng sustento.*
- Valerie, *aatras sa pagbili ng bahay.* (*Ayan kasi.*)
- *Madir, karay-karay ni* Jom *sa* concert *ni Pops.* (Sounds like... unwilling?)

JAKE Cuenca

Men and madness

- **Marian Rivera**, *luka-luka.* — Nadine Samonte (Actually, *parang si* Marimar *ang luka luka.*)
- Sitti, give up *sa akting.* (So soon?)
- Sex video *ng* boyfriend *'di nakaapekto kay* **Iwa Moto.** (It must be love.)
- **Wendell Ramos**, *imbyerna sa* 9-inches 'kiss and tell' *ni* **Gwen Garci** about **Will Devaughn.** (*Ay.*)
- **Joyce Jimenez, Jen Rosendahl** *'di* type *ang isa't isa.* (*Kasi pareho silang* girls.)
- Pokwang *sawa na sa* love life. (Whose love life?)
- Pokwang never *papatol sa tomboy lalo na sa may maruming kuko.* (This no-no shouldn't be gender-specific.)
- Pokwang *hindi rin papatol sa lalaki 'pag walang malaking pera sa* bankbook. (*Kahit may pera sa* bank?)

Friends and lovers

- **Marian Rivera** *'di* type *maging* friend *si* Katrina Halili. (The feeling is mutual, we gather.)
- Angel, *mas* type *ni* Katrina...
- *"May kanya-kanya tayong* taste." — Marian.
- Marian, *ayaw sabayan si* Katrina *tuwing kakain sa* taping. (Ah, taste *sa* food!)
- Marian, *payag mag*-topless! (Oh, she was going in that direction?)
- *Malaki na ang pinagbago ni* Osang. (Promise?)
- *Kahit magkatabing natutulog...*Paolo Paraiso, *hindi maka-dyug kay* **Mylene Dizon.** (Sabi nga ni _____, you can never can tell, can you not?
- *Kahit walang* **Yilmaz Bektas** *na kayakap...*Ruffa, *may nagpapainit gabi-gabi.* (What are electric blankets for?)
- **Ruffa** at **Rufa Mae**, *nagsalo sa isang lalaki?*
- Ruffa won't marry again. (This year.)

Bitter exes

ROXANNE Guinoo

- *Pagkatapos mag*-break-up, **Alfred Vargas** *at* **LJ Reyes** *nag-iisnaban.*
- **Roxanne, Jake** *nag*-break *dahil sa mayamang* gay. (Operative word: *mayaman* or gay?)
- **Jake**, *'di apektado sa hiwalayan nila ni* Roxanne.
- Career move *ang* break-up *nina* Christian Bautista *at* Rachelle Ann Go.
- Shaina *at* Rayver, *hiwalay na!*
- Shaina *at* John, *nahuling nag*-date *sa* Eastwood. (*Parang di naman nagtatago.*)
- Rufa Mae-Marian spat only a gimmick. (Those who are surprised, show of hands, please.)
- Marian *at* Dingdong, *tukaan nang tukaan sa 'Tate!* (*May* medical insurance *naman siguro.*)

Comings and goings

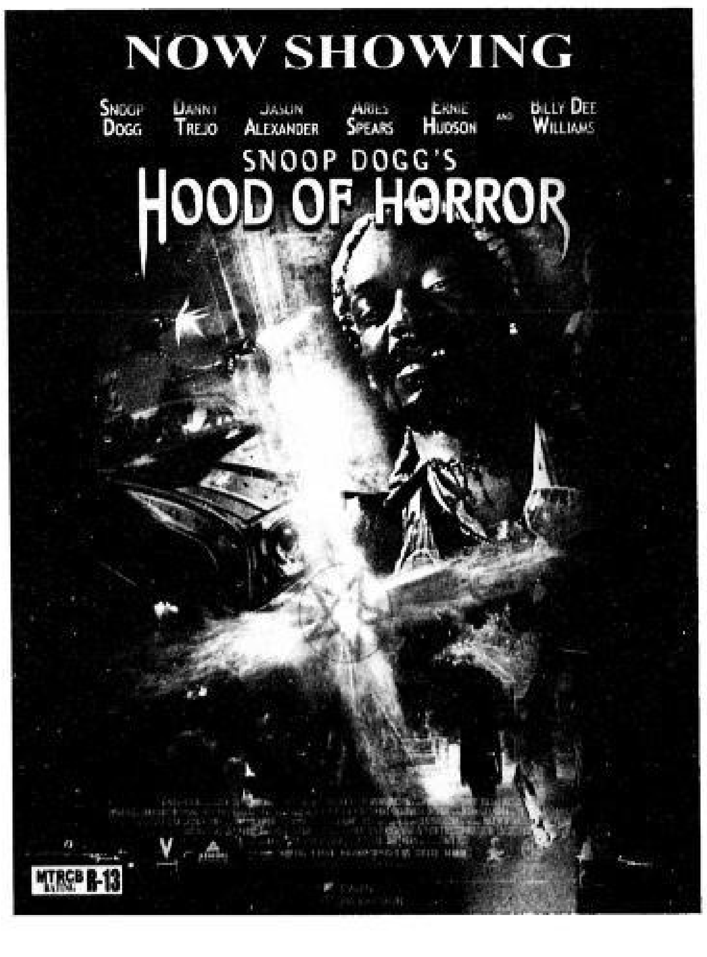
- **Jennylyn** *pabagu-bago ng isip: Dati'y gustong lumipat sa* Dos, *ngayon magre*-renew *na ulit sa* Siyete. (Ho-hum.)
- *Kahit okey na sa* GMA 7...**Cristine Reyes** *sumama pa rin kay* Ara Mina *sa* Guam.
- Ara *bibitbitin si* Cristine *sa paglipat sa* Dos. (*Parang* luggage?)
- Cristine, *makakaligtas kaya kay* Robin? (*May nakaligtas ba kay* Robin?)
- **Maricel Soriano** *'di pa handang magka-apo sa anak na si* Marron. (Not for her to decide, unfortunately.)
- Marya, *naloloko kay* **Elijah**!
- Marya, *maloloka 'pag naging lola!* (*'Di ba lola na siya ni* Elijah?)
- *Sa* Christmas special *ng* Dos...*Mas pinalakpakan si* Echo *keysa kina* Sam *at* Piolo. (...*ni* Lolit.)
- **Gary V**, *gustong maging "anak" si* **Maja Salvador.** (*E si* Angeli?)
- **Heart Evangelista**, *nawawala sa eksena.* (*Oo nga, ano*—did you notice?)
- **Judy Ann**, *'di pa rin napapatawad si* Piolo. (*Mukhang okey lang kay* Papa Piolo.)
- Boobs *ni* Precious **Lara Quigaman**, type *ni* **Rico Robles**. (Boobs lang? Puede pala 'yon?)
- Marriage still not part of **KC**'s plans, says Sharon. (*Alam ba ni* KC?)
- Ara, *dedma na lang...*Cristine, *nakipagbalikan kay* **Dennis**. (There are many things even big sisters can't do.)
- *Dahil kay* **Mariel Rodriguez**: 'Wowowee' *nabuko na hindi live.* (What do they say about fish?)
- Sam Milby, *malungkot ang* Pasko? (*Kami, masaya.*)

(Thanks to Abante, Bandera, People's Journal, People's Tonight, Remate, Tempo, Taliba, Tumbok.)

CATE Blanchett is nominated as Best Drama Actress ("Elizabeth: The Golden Age") and as Best Supporting Actress ("I'm Not There") at the forthcoming Golden Globe Awards. REUTERS

ANTONIO Banderas (C) introduces wife Melanie Griffith (L) to Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner before a private meeting in Buenos Aires. REUTERS

NANCY Sinatra and Frank Sinatra Jr. hold hands as the Frank Sinatra commemorative stamp is unveiled in Beverly Hills in this publicity photo released on Dec. 12, 2007. The postal service will print 120 million stamps. REUTERS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SNOOP DOGG DANNY TREJO JASON ALEXANDER ARIES SPEARS ERNIE HUDSON AND BILLY DEE WILLIAMS
SNOOP DOGG'S HOOD OF HORROR
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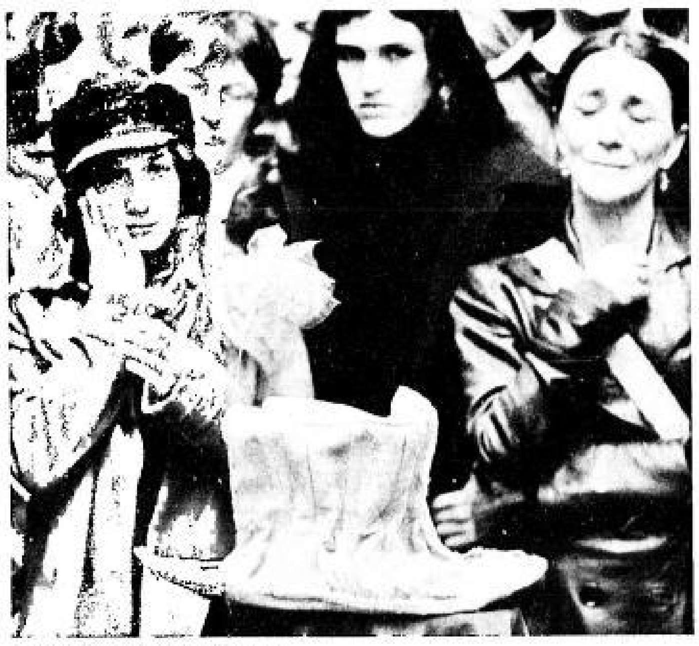
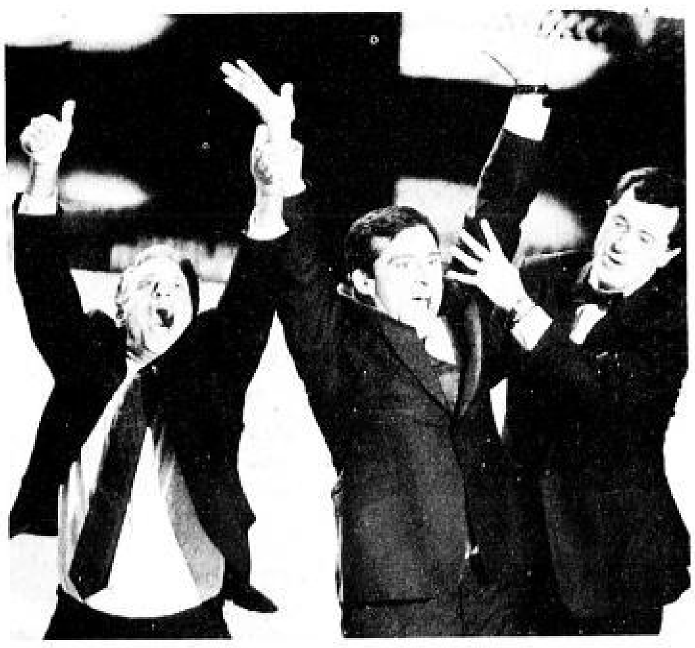
Pictures of the Year 2007


PORTRAIT OF GRIEF

The (Reuters News Pictures Service) Pictures of the Year 2007 folder shows family members of Marcel Marceau at his funeral service at the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris on Sept. 26. Marceau, the world-famous mime artist who died at age 84, created the figure of Bip, the melancholy, engaging clown with a limp red flower in his hat.


MOCK CELEBRATION

Another one in the folder shows Jon Stewart (L) and Stephen Colbert (R) "celebrating" with Steve Carell (C) at the 59th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, California, Sept. 16, 2007. Carell, a nominee for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series, went on stage because winner Ricky Gervais did not show up.

Two parallel film industries

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME MOVIE PEOPLE MAY NOT like the idea, but for all "unofficial" intents and purposes, the Philippines now has two parallel film industries—traditional mainstream movies, and the newer but more dynamic wave of digital feature productions.

Most of the theater circuit's screening hours are still devoted to mainstream productions, but on point of total output, it looks like digital filmmakers have overtaken the mainstream industry, which is only just trying to recover from a decade-long slump.

Which is not to say that the digital "industry" is raking it in. Its unconventional themes and general lack of star and production values make it difficult for its movies to connect with the generally escapist mainstream audience, so only a few independent films end up in the black.

Still, their makers persevere, because the less expensive digital format has made it possible for many new writers and directors to produce their own films.

Being new filmmakers, they are passionate about the insights their movies seek to share, so they are trying to devise unconventional ways to reach out to niche markets, despite the financial risks involved.

The rise of the digital movie industry has taken place only in the last five years, energized by seed production grants from the Cinemalaya and Cinema One alternative film festivals.

The movement has come along at precisely the right time, because it serves to partially compensate for the mainstream industry's slump.

Although mainstream movies are trying to make up for lost ground, it's still an uphill struggle.

It would be ideal if our two movie industries would work *together* for the shared resurgence of Filipino films, but this has yet to happen. True, some alternative filmmakers have "graduated" to mainstream moviemaking, but they are only a few in number.

It would also help if the "traffic" went the other way around: More mainstream stars and writer-directors should boost the alternative movement by participating in digital feature productions.

Not only would they be supporting the digital movement, but its lower costs would also make it possible for them to finally make the films they *really* want to make, so their reputations as creative and engaged movie workers would be enhanced.

That remains a dream, however, because two movie industries are sometimes critical of each other. Some mainstream people regard digital movies as inferior and excessively self-absorbed, while a number of alternative filmmakers rap mainstream producers and directors for a lack of creativity and for copping out to commercial "realities."

Despite this gap, we urge all of our filmmakers to work hard to solve Filipino movies' problems together, because those problems are daunting and must be addressed collectively for them to stand a good chance of finally being alleviated.

Two movie industries, one common goal—that's the ticket. *Can* it happen? If Filipino filmmakers of all persuasions want to truly revitalize their output, it has to.

Casey Affleck

AFTER years spent waiting in the wings, **Ben Affleck's** kid brother, **Casey**, is finally bound for stardom *via* two films—"Gone Baby Gone," directed by Ben himself, and "The Assassination of Jesse James," where Casey plays the plum role of James' killer, Robert Ford, and acts opposite **Brad Pitt**, who's cast as Jesse James.

"Gone Baby Gone" is currently showing at Ayala Mall cinemas, while "The Assassination" has a January 2008 playdate.

Elizabeth I's life still makes for a bio-pic that's quite open to narrative interpretation

CATE Blanchett in "Elizabeth: The Golden Age"

Glitters, but not quite gold

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN Age" is a well-received period drama's sequel, which doesn't happen very often. But Queen Elizabeth I's eventful, oft-chaotic life still makes for a biopic that's quite open to narrative interpretation, so it's justified.

There is still skillful storytelling by returning director Shekhar Kapur, who has proven himself previously with the seminal "Elizabeth: The Virgin Queen." While not as layered or binding as that first film, "The Golden Age" is nevertheless a good follow-up that brings back Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush to give life to their duty-bound characters anew.

Lush design

Atmospheric and lushly designed, "The Golden Age" continues the tale of England's celebrated Protestant queen a few decades later. Wiser and stronger, Elizabeth is finally comfortable with her inherited position at last. But Spain's Catholic King Phillip II (Jordi Molla) plots and readies his powerful armada for a massive assault on the "evil" Queen and her subjects. The heirless Elizabeth, meanwhile, is visited by a gaggle of suitors from various lands, and has gotten used to fending them off.

As with the first film, this sequel mostly chronicles the protagonist's transformations; her tasks usually demand that she keep her own desires under control. She fancies the alleged pirate Sir Walter Raleigh (Clive Owen) from a distance, but her most trusted lady-in-waiting, Bess (Abbie Cornish) finds herself attracted to the rogue, too. Like in the past, the queen must protect herself on personal and territorial fronts, and the parallels to the previous film are presented quite subtly.

Blanchett delivers, unquestionably, but her role this time is a more toned-down version. It's still an immensely intriguing character—she gets to play with its range—but it's gotten quite predictable. Unsurprisingly, she personifies grace and fortitude as the queen, who later rallies her loyal followers to confront the Spanish forces in a daring sea-strike.

"The Golden Age" is a simple re-telling of historical facts and is enhanced by fictional embellishments, which make it easy to follow. But the story of the warrior-queen has been told just as interestingly in last year's award-winning TV miniseries "Elizabeth I," whose title role was amazingly brought to life by Helen Mirren. Details differ, obviously, but you get a more impassioned Queen Elizabeth in that format. While Mirren's take presents her as a little manic-depressive, Blanchett's composed and stoic Virgin Queen also hides a stern side. But you see her outbursts and fury coming. Still, both portrayals have their strengths, so it's apples and oranges.

Spectacular performers

Anyway, "Elizabeth: The Golden Age" has a big action sequence, which the original film didn't have or require. But that fateful battle's jaggedly presented. Some parts look artistically photographed, while the action choreography and editing sometimes feel off. It's a bit more playful, and smoother in terms of cinematography and costumes, though. But more importantly, the performances are spectacular. Aside from Blanchett, Cornish, Rush (as her advisor Francis Walsingham), and Samantha Morton (as the scheming cousin Mary Stuart) also contribute greatly. Collectively, they bring emotional resonance to a couple of cold or numbing scenarios.

"The Golden Age" can stand alone, but viewing its predecessor is highly recommended, to those who've yet to see it. This sequel isn't as precise, dramatic, or elegant as the original, but it's still definitely something worth seeing.

Tarantino and his barong . . .

From page K4

and to be involved with 'Grace Is Gone.' I was deeply moved by the story in many ways. Being able to express those emotions through music has been a very gratifying experience. I want to especially thank John Cusack whose performance was an inspiration, writer/director **James Strouse** for a touching story and Harvey Weinstein for the opportunity to create the score."—**Clint Eastwood**

'The Great Debaters,' 'I'm Not There' and 'Grace is Gone'

"We are absolutely thrilled that the Hollywood Foreign Press Association has recognized **Denzel Washington, Oprah, Cate Blanchett** and Clint Eastwood on their well deserved nominations. We are excited that 'The Great Debaters' will be released on Christmas Day and today's nomination is a great launching point. My brother and I are especially excited that 'The Great Debaters' has received a Best Picture nomination and honored that our films have received Best Picture Nominations for 12 consecutive years in a row."—**Harvey Weinstein**, Co-Chairman of The Weinstein Company

"We are grateful to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association for recognizing 'The Great Debaters' with this nomination. This film is a tribute to all those who strive to exceed expectations, especially those who were determined to be successful in a time when no one thought they could. We are very proud of this film, its message and its artistry."—Oprah Winfrey and **Kate Forte**, Harpo Films

"Denzel Washington called me before the sun went up and it was a wonderful alarm clock!"—**Todd Black**

'Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story'

"I am thrilled and honored that the HFPA has acknowledged the hard work of everyone who poured their hearts into 'Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story.' I look forward to celebrating our film and all the other great movies, comedic and dramatic, at this year's Golden Globes. I am proud to carry the torch for **Jake Kasdan, Judd Apatow** and **Mike Andrews** without whom I could not have pulled off this performance. Somewhere, **Dewey Cox** is smiling."—**John C. Reilly**

'The Diving Bell and the Butterfly'

"This is a great honor for me and the film, and I feel a very deep connection with the Hollywood Foreign Press. I may not have helped my own father cope with death, but hopefully I have helped others."—Julian Schnabel

RYAN Reynols

'No Country for Old Men'

"Working with the Coens has always been a dream of mine, and to be recognized for my work in one of their films is truly an honor. *Muchas gracias* to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association!"—**Javier Bardem**

'Gone Baby Gone'

"Playing Helene McCready, such a well written and delicious character, was such a thrill. To be recognized by the Hollywood Foreign Press for this is such a huge honor and I am incredibly touched and grateful. I am forever thankful to **Ben Affleck**, an amazingly gifted director, my fellow cast members, and for Ben and Aaron Stockard's beautiful script."—**Amy Ryan**

'The Kite Runner'

"It is a true honor for the HFPA to recognize 'The Kite Runner.' The Afghan people—their warmth, their struggles, their generosity—touched me deeply. This film is their story, but theirs is the spirit of humanity and it was my privilege to be able to share it."—**Marc Forster**

'Atonement'

"I'm absolutely thrilled, and it's so wonderful that the film has been nominated in so many categories. I adored making it, and am delighted for Joe, James, Saoirse and everyone involved."—**Keira Knightley**

"It's a great honor to have been nominated for a Golden Globe amongst such illustrious company. Atonement is a film about which I'm deeply passionate and it's a huge thrill to see it embraced by the HFPA with so many nominations."—**James McAvoy**

"I loved playing Briony, so this is incredibly exciting for myself and my families—my family at home, and my 'Atonement' family. I am so happy that they were recognized for their achievements. Go Raibh Mile Maith Agaibh—that means 'thank you very much' in Irish."—**Saoirse Ronen**

HAYDEN Panettiere

'Love in the Time of Cholera'

"I composed 'Despedida' with all my love for Garcia Marquez, who is for me a true genius and the most eloquent spokesman of my people, so it is an honor to have this music embraced by the members of the Hollywood Foreign Press. 'Despedida' is my dream song; I have always wanted to create a song that evoked the mountains of my country and the lament of the Andes. To create music inspired by the works of one of the most extraordinary writers in history, and also a close friend to my heart like **Gabriel Garcia Marquez** was a unique opportunity I could not miss. It has been so refreshing to step out for a second from the world of pop music to create songs in the context of Latin American folk."—**Shakira**

'Enchanted'

"'Enchanted' has been a wonderful experience for me. I am grateful for my cast mates, the crew, Disney and everyone involved with making the film. It's been magical."—**Amy Adams**

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

What Globe list proves: Good TV is on cable

NEW YORK— IF THERE was any doubt, the Golden Globes has sounded a clear message: This year, the best TV is on cable.

Broadcast networks scored only 20 of the 60 television nominations announced Thursday. Most of them went to ABC's "Grey's Anatomy," Fox's "House" and NBC's "30 Rock" (all represented by awards last year) and ABC's freshman series "Pushing Daisies."

Golden sight

But cable was golden in the eyes of Globes judges, starting with FX's new "Damages." This critically praised legal drama, which barely escaped cancellation due to low ratings, landed four nominations: Best Drama Series, Lead Actress (Glenn Close), Supporting Actress (Rose Byrne) and Supporting Actor (Ted Danson).

Best actress nominee Edie Falco got the sole nod directed toward HBO's "The Sopranos" for its much-ballyhooed final season. Showtime scored with two new series: "Californication," nominated for Best Comedy and Best Lead Actor (David Duchovny), and "The Tudors," for both Best Drama and its star, Jonathan Rhys Meyers.

Christina Applegate, whose new ABC comedy "Samantha Who?" became one of the fall season's pleasant surprises, was surprised at her own Best Actress nod.

ABC led the broadcast networks with 11 nods, though its past Globes darlings "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost" were ignored. CBS almost got totally shut out — its lone nomination was for Sissy Spacek's starring performance in the film "Pictures of Hollis Woods."

HBO typically looms large when nominations are announced, and this year is no different: It topped all networks with 18, including Best Drama Series for "Big Love" and Best Comedy for "Entourage."

"Mad Men" was the season's new drama widely hailed as good enough to be HBO — but instead it was AMC's first original scripted drama series. And it was duly noted by the judges, snagging nominations for Best Drama as well as a Best Actor nod for its star, Jon Hamm.

Ernest Borgnine was rightly nominated for Hallmark Channel's "A Grandpa for Christmas." Playing the title character, the 90-year-old could turn out to be the oldest Globes recipient ever.

Terrific newcomer

The Globes made room for "Mad Men's" terrific newcomer Hamm and "The Tudors'" arresting Rhys Meyers, going up against Michael C. Hall from Showtime's "Dexter," Bill Paxton from HBO's "Big Love," and last year's winner, Hugh Laurie from Fox's "House."

For Best Actress, Close, Holly Hunter from TNT's freshman drama "Saving Grace" and Minnie Driver from FX's new "The Riches" will compete against Falco and three other series veterans: Sally Field from ABC's "Brothers and Sisters," Patricia Arquette from NBC's "Medium" and last year's winner, Kyra Sedgwick from TNT's "The Closer." *AP*

Tarantino and his barong steal the scene at Globes nominations announcement

Quentin was a refreshing choice to help announce the nominees, adding fun to the proceedings

ANG NAG-IISANG HERO NG BAYAN
VIC SOTTO KRISTINE HERMOSA
IAN VENERACION FRANCINE PRIETO CARLOS AGASSI AND MICHAEL DE MESA
OYO SOTTO GISELLE "G" TONGI JOSE MANALO AIZA SEGUERRA
RUBY RODRIGUEZ MIKYLLA RAMIREZ ARTHUR SOLINAP AND PEQUE GALLAGA
Enteng Kabisote 4
Okay Ka Fairy Ko... The Beginning Of The Legend
A FILM BY TONY Y. REYES
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2007
IN THEATERS THIS CHRISTMAS DAY
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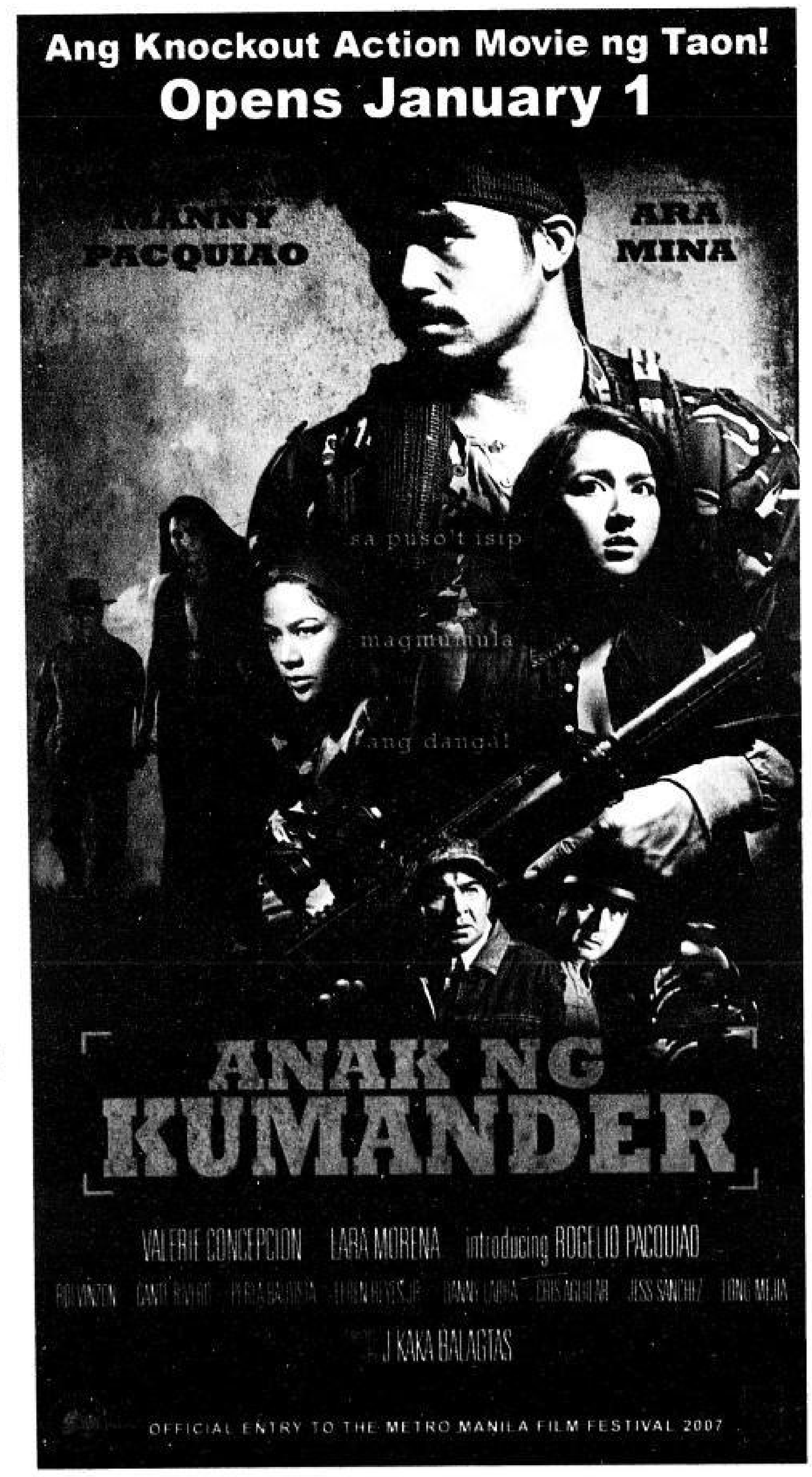

Ang Knockout Action Movie ng Taon!
Opens January 1
MANNY PACQUIAO
ARA MINA

ANAK NG KUMANDER
VALERIE CONCEPCION LARA MORENA introducing ROGELIO PACQUIAO
J KAKA BALAGTAS
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2007

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

(The columnist is the first and only Filipino member of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association in its 65-year history. The association votes on and presents the Golden Globe Awards each January.)

LOS ANGELES—"I LIKE your barong!" we exclaimed to writer-director Quentin Tarantino as he, Ryan Reynolds and Hayden Panetierre got ready to announce the nominees for the 65th Annual Golden Globe Awards very early Thursday morning in the Beverly Hills Ballroom of The Beverly Hilton.

Breaking into a smile, Quentin reacted by giving a thumbs up sign. It seems as though the dude has not taken off the barong since he received the Cinemanila Film Festival's Lifetime Achievement Award in Malacañang last August. He has been sighted even in Ireland wearing the same combo at this ungodly hour of 5 in the morning: cream-colored barong, black track pants with a white vertical stripe on each side and matching black and white sneakers. If he keeps wearing our national shirt, he might start a cool fashion trend in Hollywood.

Quentin was a refreshing choice to help announce the nominees. The iconoclastic filmmaker added a fun touch to the normally somber live telecast. He spoke in a playful tone as he rattled off his share of the nominations list. He did not disguise his glee as he read the name of ex-stripper **Diablo Cody** as one of the scriptwriter nominees for her smart, hip work on "Juno." He raised his right arm and yelled, "Yay!" Very Quentin. The packed media crowd loved him—they cheered him on.

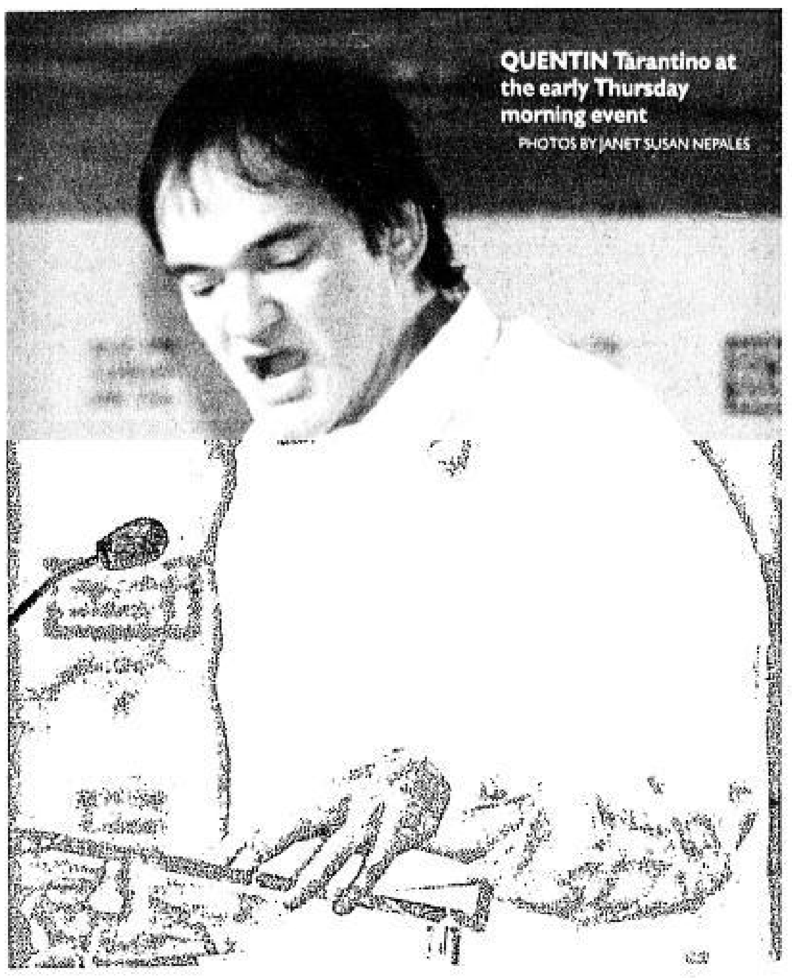
All the names, films and TV show titles that Quentin, Hayden and Ryan (who were introduced by our group's president, **Jorge Camara**) read were worthy of the nominations. It was a bountiful year of outstanding performances from actors. Sadly, there weren't many good film roles for actresses in 2007 and consequently, the list of strong actress contenders was not as long as that for the actors. (In the TV categories, however, it's a different story. There are seven, not the usual five, nominees in the best actress—drama series. That means there was a tie in the voting for these women: **Glenn Close, Holly Hunter, Kyra Sedgwick, Edie Falco, Sally Field, Minnie Driver** and **Patricia Arquette.**)

We had a tough time filling out our nominations ballot in the actor categories last weekend. The field of great turns by male thespians was impressive.

The following were just as worthy of nods as the ones whose names were called out Thursday dawn: **Tommy Lee Jones** (he was terrific in both "No Country for Old Men" and "In the Valley of Elah"), **Paul Dano** (absolutely fine in "There Will Be Blood"), **Josh Brolin** ("No Country..."), **Brad Pitt** ("The Assassination of Jesse James"), **Matt Damon** ("The Bourne Ultimatum"), **Emile Hirsch** ("Into the Wild"), **Christian Bale** ("Rescue Dawn" and "3:10 to Yuma"), **John Cusack** ("Grace is Gone"), **Frank Langella** ("Starting Out in the Evening"), **Chris Cooper** ("Breach"), **Glen Hansard** ("Once"), **Michael Cera** and **J.K. Simmons** ("Juno"). And many more.

French actor **Mathieu Amalric,** who is memorable in "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly" as a fashion magazine editor who was paralyzed after a stroke but managed to write a memoir, could have joined the Best Actor list, too.

All the nominated films are must-see ones but if you can only watch one movie this season, we hope you get to see "The Diving Bell...," which was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film. It was based on the true story of Elle editor-in-chief **Jean-Dominique Bauby** who miraculously dictated a memoir one letter at a time by using the only muscle he could control: one eyelid. The French alphabet was dictated to him—he "wrote" by blinking once to say yes; two blinks meant no.



QUENTIN Tarantino at the early Thursday morning event

PHOTOS BY JANET SUSAN NEPALES

Although that scenario sounds harrowing, the film is not bleak at all. We hear Jean-Dominique's musings which are funny, witty and inspired. It doesn't hurt that when he gains consciousness, the parade of beautiful women (including his ex-wife, nurses and therapists) and his wry, lascivious reflections begin. American painter-turned-filmmaker **Julian Schnabel,** who earned a Best Director nod, has made a deeply affecting film that we have seen three times already. And we won't mind seeing it again. Trust us—it's that good and so resonant with our too-busy lives.

After the nominations announcement, as Quentin finally managed to get away from the crush of reporters hounding him for more comments, we teased him that he probably hasn't taken off that barong since he left Manila. He laughed out aloud. The Philippines may have found its best fashion ambassador yet.

Below are some of the reaction comments from some of the contenders for the Golden Globe Awards show in January:

'Eastern Promises'

"Thank you for acknowledging our movie in this year's nominations for the Golden Globe prizes. I am very proud to be in 'Eastern Promises,' which I believe is one of the most creatively satisfying and thought-provoking movies released this year. It is an honor to be included on your list of actors chosen for the 2008 ceremony. 'Nikolai' is a unique role, and I will always be grateful to David Cronenberg for allowing me to play him."—**Viggo Mortensen**

"For me, there was only one actor who could powerfully convey the lead character Nikolai's many subtleties in 'Eastern Promises'—and only one composer who could provide the aural context for Nikolai's world. That Viggo Mortensen and Howard Shore are now both Golden Globe Award nominees is perfect and exciting."—**David Cronenberg**

'Lust, Caution'

"I am very grateful to the Hollywood Foreign Press. This film is very special to all of us who worked on it and I very much appreciate the support that the members of this organization have shown it."—**Ang Lee**

'Sweeney Todd'

"What an honor to even be mentioned alongside such a talented bunch. I am very excited for Tim and Helena and the film! I am super-flattered and immensely thankful to the HFPA for the nomination."—**Johnny Depp**

"I'm very happy! I am fairly globular at the moment as I am about to have a baby. Tim (Burton, my partner) wants to paint my belly gold!"—**Helena Bonham Carter**

"It's a great honor to receive this nomination from the HFPA. I couldn't be more thrilled for Johnny, Helena and the film."—**Tim Burton**

"I'm delighted with the nominations and most grateful to the Hollywood Foreign Press... but I'm especially thrilled for Tim, whose vision encompassed this entire endeavor. He has wanted to make this movie for over 20 years and this is a great tribute to his passion and hard work."—**Richard D. Zanuck** (Producer)

'The Brave One'

"The nomination is so exciting and surprising at the same time. Never saw it coming... It's strange to continue to feel a character in your blood long after it wraps. I am so proud of 'The Brave One,' of where **Neil Jordan** took the character of Erica Bain. The experience of playing her has moved me deeper than anything I can remember. I can't wait to have some rubber chicken and listen to the unscripted banter with all of those fine actresses."—**Jodie Foster**

'The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford'

"I am really proud to be part of **Andrew Dominik**'s film, and it is an honor to be included with such a great group of actors."—**Casey Affleck**

'Juno'

"I am extremely excited the film has been recognized with three nominations. I feel grateful to be a part of this movie in the first place, playing Juno was an enormous gift. Diablo Cody wrote one of the best screenplays I've ever read so I am thrilled she is receiving so much acclaim. None of this would be possible without Jason Reitman and the entire cast. Everyone put their whole heart into making this film, so I am overjoyed with the response, and it is an honor to be nominated."—**Ellen Page**

"'Juno' is a movie that rests on the shoulders of its great cast and screenwriter so I can't think of anything more deserving than the nominations for Ellen and Diablo. They are both at the front of incredible careers. The best picture nomination is a real thrill. I never really expected anything like that in my career, let alone two years in a row."—**Jason Reitman**

'Hairspray'

"It's been 30 years since my first Golden Globe nomination for 'Saturday Night Fever' and as the years go by I find it even more of an honor and privilege to be recognized by them."—**John Travolta**

"Thanks to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association for this wonderful honor. I'm so proud to have been a part of Hairspray and given the opportunity to play the strong, confident Tracy Turnblad. The entire experience, working with the divine **Queen Latifah,** legendary John Travolta, **Neil Meron, Craig Zadan** and **Adam Shankman** has been a dream come true!"—**Nikki Blonsky**

'Grace is Gone'

"It's an honor to be nominated

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that the following companies previously placed under conservatorship and/or receivership for cause by the Insurance Commission, are now due for liquidation, namely:

Insurance Company	Name & Address of Liquidator
1. Rico General Insurance Corporation	Ms. Teresita P. Gutierrez 408 A. Evekal Building 855 A. Arnaiz Avenue Makati City
2. Development Insurance & Surety Co.	Atty. John A. Apatan c/o Insurance Commission 1071 United Nations Avenue Ermita, Manila

Parties having claims against these companies are hereby notified to file their claims under oath not later than six (6) months from the date of the last publication of this notice on December 23, 2007, or until **June 23, 2008**, together with all supporting documents and/or relevant proofs detailing the character, basis and amount of each and every claim, directly with the appointed Liquidator either personally or by mail, for consideration in their eventual liquidation, pursuant to pertinent provisions of the Insurance Code, as amended. **CLAIMS FILED AFTER JUNE 23, 2008 SHALL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REMAINING ASSETS, IF ANY, AFTER SETTLEMENT OF ALL CLAIMS SUBMITTED WITHIN THE SAID DEADLINE.**

EDUARDO T. MALINIS
Insurance Commissioner

(PDI–Dec. 2, 9, 16 & 23, 2007)

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(PDI – December 16, 2007)

Simbang Gabi @ D'CCP

CELEBRATE AND RELIVE THE SPIRIT OF the Yuletide Season with dawn masses from Dec. 16–24, (5 a.m.) and Misa de Aguinaldo on Dec. 24, (9 p.m.) at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Main Building Ramp. Spearheaded by the CCP, the event is held in cooperation with Manila Broadcasting Company, Coconut Palace, Gloriamaris Restaurant, Philippine Navy, Sofitel Philippine Plaza, Product Development and Design Center, Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), Harbour Square, Amazing Philippine Theater, Senate Spouses Foundation, Shirley Halili-Cruz School of Ballet, Barbara's Food and Catering Inc, Traders Hotel, Our Lady of Sorrows and the Cultural Center of the Philippines Complex Employees' Organization (CCPCEO).

The traditional annual celebration is held not only to observe the spirit of the Christmas Season, but to foster goodwill and cooperation within the CCP Complex establishments and other organizations as well.

For more information, contact the CCP Theater Operations Department at 832-1125 loc. 1412/1413.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Republic of the Philippines
Rural Power Project - GEF Grant No. TF 052188
Project ID No. P066397
Consulting Services

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Department of Energy (DOE) has received financing from Global Environment Facility (GEF), through the World Bank, toward the cost of the Rural Power Project (RPP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services. The services required is for a **Transaction and Implementation** Consultant firm to advise, proactively manage and coordinate the completion of the design, preparation and execution of the **Sustainable Solar Market Packages** (SSMP 2) tenders and the financial closure of the contracts, and then to lead the DOE Project Management Office (PMO) in the management of these contracts.

The RPP promotes the use of renewable energy technologies, particularly solar PV systems, on a commercial basis for dispersed households that are not feasible to be connected to the grid. Under the scheme, the RPP has introduced **Project ACCESS** (Accelerating Community Electricity Services using Solar) using the SSMP approach. SSMP recognizes that the scale of solar business operation must be sufficiently large to overcome the transaction costs of doing business in remote areas and to create a commercially viable business. SSMP employs the following enabling measures:

- Clustering of communities (barangays) into commercially viable SSMP packages that will be bid out on a competitive basis;
- Use of public and donor resources to finance the energy requirements for key public facilities such as barangay halls, health centers, schools, street lights, etc.;
- Innovative subsidies to buy down the capital costs and improve affordability of home systems;
- Financial incentives and technical assistance for firms to address market barriers; and
- Strong focus on after-sales services and continued marketing.

Following DOE-PMO's experience in piloting the first SSMP initiative, a follow-on Project ACCESS is under preparation using the SSMP approach, and will target an estimated 572 barangays.

The assignment will be for two years, in two phases. Under phase 1, the scope of work will entail (i) review SSMP1 (pilot) experience, (ii) review design and preparations for SSMP2 including risk analysis and recommendations of improvements, (iii) prepare the SSMP2 bid packages, (iv) review implementation capacities for SSMP2 and recommend improvements, and (v) coordinate and control quality of all activities to achieve financial closure of SSMP2 transactions. Under phase 2, work will include (vi) coordinate, facilitate and support SSMP2 linked communications, capacity building, MIS and implementation support activities, (vii) monitor, maintain databases and report on performance of SSMP2 implementation of contracts, (viii) recommend remedial and other actions in cases of contractors' non-compliance for reasons of force majeure or other conditions that impact implementations of contracts, and (ix) prepare consolidated reports on SSMP2 progress and recommend adjustments to design and activities on an on-going basis.

The Consultant firm shall field a multidisciplinary team comprising a Lead Transaction Advisor, Management and Business Development Specialist, Economist and Financial Analyst, Procurement and Legal Specialist, PV Technical Specialist, and others as necessary to carry out the assignment. The key personnel for this assignment is required to have among them a minimum of ten years experience in managing large transactions, projects on renewable energy and off-grid electrification, as well as experience as Transaction Advisor or Project Manager for public-private partnership projects. Experience in the Philippines directly relevant for this assignment would be a distinct advantage.

The DOE-PMO now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's ***Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers*** **(May 2002).**

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours, 0900 – 1700 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by **10 January 2008.**

Department of Energy,
Rural Power Project – Project Management Office
Attn: **MYLENE C. CAPONGCOL**
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio
Taguig City, Metro Manila 1201
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Fax: (632) 840-2120
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(PDI - Dec. 16, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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NOTICE
TO ALL FOREIGNERS

All registered foreigners, permanent or temporary residents in the Philippines are hereby reminded **to report in person**, pursuant to Section 10 of the Alien Registration Act of 1950, **within the first sixty (60) days (from 02 January to 01 March) of 2008** at the Alien Registration Division (ARD), Bureau of Immigration, Manila, or at the Immigration Support/District/Field office nearest their place of residence:

The following documents shall be presented by the foreigner during the Annual Report (AR):

1. Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) / ACR I-Card,
2. Certificate of Residence (CR), and
3. Official Receipts (O.R.'s) covering payment of previous AR fees.

An **Annual Report fee of P300.00** and **P10.00 Legal Research fee** shall be paid by the foreigner.

The parent or legal guardian of a foreigner who is less than fourteen (14) years of age, shall have the duty of reporting for such foreigner. Provided, that whenever such foreigner attains his fourteenth birthday in the Philippines, he shall within fifteen (15) days from his 14th birthday apply in person for re-registration and fingerprinting, paying the registration fee and thereafter make his own annual report once a year within the period and at the place above designated.

A foreigner holder of paper-based ACR, whose visa is not exempt from payment of immigration fees, shall not be permitted to make his Annual Report without applying for an ACR I-Card. The deadline to apply for ACR I-Card shall expire on 31 December 2007 pursuant to Memorandum Order No. AFF-07-006 dated 21 February 2007.

Foreigners who fail to comply with the provisions of the Alien Registration Act of 1950 are subject to administrative fine and/or imprisonment, at the option of the Commissioner of Immigration.

(Sgd.) **MARCELINO C. LIBANAN**
Commissioner

(PDI – December 15 & 16, 2007)

SMAP celebrates at 85

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY OF PASAY CELebrates its 85 years of service in Catholic education that is Ignacian and Marian in spirituality. The year-long event which opened on December 2006 carries the theme, SMA-P @ 85: Celebrating the Ignacian-Marian Legacy, Venturing New Paths, Upholding Excellence.

The following activities are slated this December:

Dec. 20 — "Parangal at Pasasalamat: St. Mary's Academy Pasay Culminates 85th Year Anniversary Celebration." St. Mary's Academy of Pasay culminates its 85th year anniversary celebration on Dec. 20. The year-long event which opened December 2006, carries the theme, SMA-P @ 85: Celebrating the Ignacian-Marian Legacy, Venturing New Paths, Upholding Excellence. The closing ceremony starts at four o'clock in the afternoon with a Eucharistic celebration with His Eminence Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales as mass celebrant followed by the award ceremony.

Dec. 21 — @ 85 with 85: St. Mary's Academy Pasay at 85 Celebrates Christmas with 85 Adopted Families. St. Mary's Academy of Pasay adopted eighty five (85) families from its partner community on Sept. 27. As part of the corporate social responsibility of SMA-P, the entire community composed of students, personnel, and parents will share their blessings and merriment of Christmas with these families on Friday Dec. 21, at the school campus. The selection of adopted families was carried out in partnership with the Social Services and Development Ministry of the Sta. Clara de Montefalco Parish in Pasay.

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4 SALE '99 2.5 Lt
semi functioning surplus engine used in 523i sedan, 4 cannibalization, scrap or repair 50k NEGOTIABLE -09175387365

CAR LOAN

1% AUTOLOAN 788-0361

1% Car Lending 6560140 United Tree Car Loan Corp.

1% CARLOAN 373-6519

1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% EASY CARLOAN 8997759

1% Sangla ur Car 5344441

1% w/out taking car 5315577

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% W/O TAKING CAR 7880183-84

2% w/o Taking Car 7225647/48

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/out taking car 7262780

BILLIARDS

BLIARD TBLE 38T-UP 8014494

GARAGE SALE

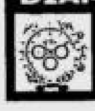
BIG SALE 150-A 9th St. New Manila Q.C. 8-2pm

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT PIANOS: TERMS -T7213124

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX
SWISS WATCHES, LV BAGS
JEWELRY DIAMONDS



BEST PRICE
SPOT CASH
3829198
8341572

WE BUY at HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
HIS & HERS Watch Center
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Glorietta-2, Makati
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CARTIER, IWC PATEK, BULGARI
SWISS WATCHES
GOLD & DIAMOND SPECIALISTS
sec|ndo' Glorietta
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MISCELLANEOUS

Elect wheelchair 09178227788

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late NORBERTO TAN was extrajudicially settled by heirs as per Doc. No. 015; Page No. 4; Book No. XXVI; Series of 2007 before Notary Public Atty. Jose V. Marcella of Pasig City.
(PDI-Dec. 9, 16 & 23, 2007)

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late SANTOS F. VERGA was extrajudicially settled among their heirs as per Doc# III Page# 24 Book# I Series of 2007 by Notary Public Atty. Robert M. Panganiban of Pasig City.
(PDI - Dec. 16, 23 & 30, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late NATIVIDAD C. CUEVAS who died on June 9 2007, was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc 84 Page 18 Book XII Series of 2007 under Notary Public of Carlito P. Egana of Makati City (PDI- Dec. 2, 9, 16, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ILDEFONSO B. SANTOS JR. was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc#384 Page#78 Book#554 Series of 2007 before Atty. Lucila M. Lawas-Yutok of Pasig City
(PDI-Dec. 2, 9 & 16, 2007)

Notice is hereby giventhat the estate of the late CATALINA C. VILLARBA who died on May 14, 2007 was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 73, Page 15 Book No. VII, Series of 2007 under Notary Public Atty. Hipolito Sañez of Pasig City
(PDI-Dec.16, 23 & 30, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PURITA ZAFRA-IBASETA was extrajudicially settled by the heirs as Per Doc No. 90 Page No. 19 Book No. XXV Series of 2007 By Notary Public Atty.Eleonor T. Hernandez of Muntinlupa City M.M.(PDI-Dec 9,16, & 23,07)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late REMEDIOS C. BANOT was extrajudicially settled By the heirs as per Doc. No. 75; Page No. 14 Book No. 10; Series of 2007 By Notary Public Atty. Arthuro A. Cabides of City of Manila
(PDI-Dec. 9,16,23,2007)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that A. Soriano Corp. Stock Cert. Nos. A00040192 A00040775 A00078780 A00097655 ,A00116037 with 8,887 total shares registered to Imelda Agri Farms Co. Inc. was lost. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
PDI-Dec. 9, 16 & 23, 2007

Notice is hereby given to that PHILEX MINING CORPORATION,
Stock Certificates No.
0110855,0117353
0122015,0123405
0140055,0170228
0184940,0217321,A0012436
A0051152 ,A0083932
A0179683,A0241333
Reported lost if no contest is recieved New certificates will be issued
(PDI-Dec.16,23&30 07)

PERSONAL

Ask St. Claire 3 wishes = 1 Biz, 2 Impossible. Say 8 Hail Mary 9 Days w/ lighted candle, pray whether you believe it or not. Publish on 9th day. May Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, adored and glorified today and everyday. Request will be granted no matter how impossible it seems. St. Claire, St. Jude, St. Therese, Infant of Prague, St. Ann, St. Joseph, pray for us.- TG

• COUNSELING • 09175325705

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

APPLY CASH LOAN! 3831698 / 09286200830

Bank T.D. 20% P/A 4338659

"US CO. Listed in NYSE Looking for Key People to Expand Business". 09178101851 8531008

MINDANAO EXPANSION!
BUTUAN,CDO,IPIL,PAGADAN PART TIME! EARN UP TO
P 5,000.00 / WEEK!
COLL.GRAD. 0918-6028492

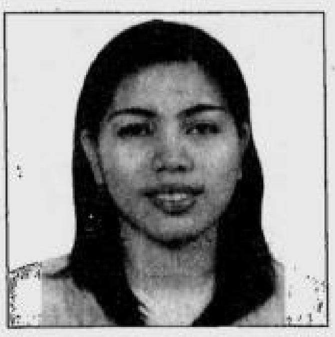
RTW CONSIGN Infant Kid Teen Adult wear09178830002

www.workfromhome.xm.com

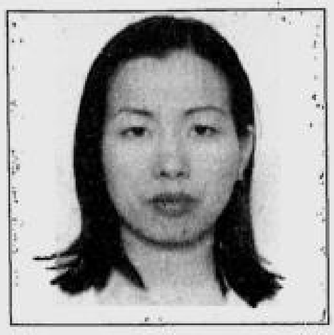
BUSINESS FOR SALE

RESTO RDY TO OPERATE Com'l /Congressional QC 453-9043 / 0922-8895662

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



MARY ROSE N. PATENIA



RIZALIE N. MATELA

THE ABOVE-NAMED PERSONS ARE NO LONGER CONNECTED WITH LOTTE PHILIPPINES CO., INC. SINCE JUNE 04, 2007. ANY TRANSACTION MADE BY THE ABOVE-NAMED PERSONS ON BEHALF OF THE SAID CORPORATION SHALL NOT BE HONORED.

(PDI – December 16, 2007)

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING ROLEX
SWISS WATCHES BEST PRICE
7269687•0917-8884040

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ACCT/BOOKEEPER Computer literate send Bio Data #80 Kamuning Rd QC Urgent

ASAP ACCTG CLRK W EXP SUBMIT RESUME 5F PRUDENTIALIFE BLDG 843 A ARNAIZ AVE MAKATI LOOK FOR KATHY HORTIZ 8138420

DRIVER SALESMAN, SALESMAN w/ Motorcycle P400 + Comm. Tel.02-916-4230 Suite#1202

ENGLISH TUTORS (LANG.CTR) #820-1246 09209232187

EXE. ASSISTANT 8954748

OPTHALMIC CO. needs: SALES MANAGER, MED REPS Call: Lady 0928-3303507 7355341 loc 442

Urgent!!! EYELASH EXTENSION ER EXPERT MANICURIST Call 409-3638

URGENT: SALES STAFF
- Computer Literate
- Independent w/ Exp.
- 25-35 y/o Design & Acctg. background preferred

MESSENGER / JANITOR
- Trustworthy, Hardworking

Submit Resumé w/ pic to DIRETSO DESIGN LRI Plaza 210 N. Garcia Bel-Air Makati

MALE

Liaison Clerk 5315228 5312365

FEMALE

FEMALE MKTG EXECS. w/ Allowance Call 0917-4739568

HOUSE MANAGER
(w/ exp. & can cook)
For Forbes Park Resident
30-45 y/o Female
09178348790 / 7505346
Malen / Lalaine

MALE/FEMALE

HRM, Trdesmen, Professionals. For Canada Immigration 8910593

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
3rd Flr., Andenson Bldg. II, Brgy. Parian, Calamba City

December 14, 2007

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
1. INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION Brgy. Biga, Silang, Cavite	Mr. Charles Ng'Oma Zulu/ Canadian	Director for Regional Center for Asia
2. MIRA TRADING & CONSULTING, INC. Don Jose, Sta. Rosa City	Ms. Mi Ra Park/ Korean	Marketing Manager
3. C & F MANUFACTURING PHILS. CORP. CEZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Desmond Joseph Kenny/ Irish	Vice President
4. SANRITSU GREAT INT'L. CORP. CEZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Eiichi Oda/ Japanese	Technical Adviser (Press Dept.)
5. DAEDUCK PHILS., INC. CEZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Hyeun Muk Lee/ Korean	Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR., CESO III
Regional Director

(PDI–December 16, 2007)

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Sta. Rosa, Laguna Golf & Residential Community

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www.staelena.com.ph

3 VICTORIAN T/HOUSE UNIT IN BRITANNY BAY LA POSADA
@ BELOW DEVELOPER'S PRICE

UNIT	L/A	F/A	PRICE	NOW
D21	88M2	171 M2	7.5M	6.034M
D3	98M2	171M2	8.363M	7.7M
D01	88M2	171M2	8.158M	6.527M
Portfolio Lot 522M2			P6.8M	P5.9M

TONY ONGSIAKO
(0919) 338-8288
Tel. No. 4216182/83 LOC 104

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MINIMUM SPACE AVAILABLE : **70 sq.m.**
MAXIMUM SPACE AVAILABLE : **520 sq.m.**

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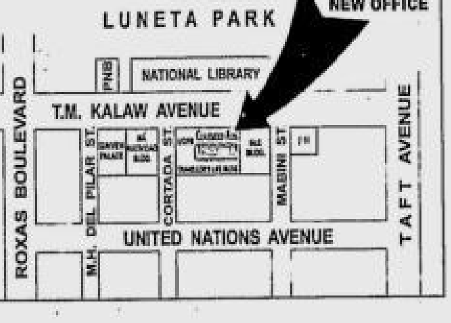
loc. 115 or 116
528-0213 (Direct Line)

Classified Ads INQUIRER
NEW OFFICE



FE DIMACALI JOSE

Peacefully joined our Creator and her husband Sebastian Jose at the age of 95 on Thursday, December 13, 2007.

Her bereaved children **Teresita, Norma** and **Manny**, and **Antonio** (†); grandchildren **André Paolo, Anthony Patrick, Anne Penelope, Madeleine Grace**, and **Fidel Matthew**; and her nephews and nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Rizal Funeral Homes, Libertad, Pasay City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, December 18, 2007, at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family and relatives of the late

SEDFREY A. ORDOÑEZ

who peacefully joined his Creator on November 18, 2007

wish to express our gratitude and appreciation
to all those who in one way or another condoled with us
in our hour of bereavement.

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

Mandaluyong branch is open to serve your Classified Ads requirements.

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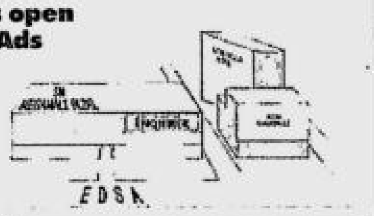
SM MEGAMALL 5TH LEVEL, BLDG. B, EDSA
TEL. NO.: 635-0219 / 637-2008
Contact Persons:
Joy, Arnold, Arnel & Vincent



An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your

Always caring...

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

PROJECT NO. 1
DESCRIPTION : **SUPPLY OF IT EQUIPMENT**
LOCATION : **Commission on Human Rights U.P. Complex, SAAC Building Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, Quezon City**
APPROVED BUDGET : **P1,496,000.00 (Regular Capital Outlay)**
PRE-BID CONFERENCE : **December 21, 2007, 2:00 p.m. Conference Room**
SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS : **January 11, 2008, 10:00 a.m. CHR Conference Room**
SPECIFICATION :

No. of Units	Description
One (1)	Server Machine
One (1)	Server Machine
One (1)	500 GB cap. USB 2.0 Interface External Hard drive
Nineteen (19)	Small Form Factor PC With built-in power supply
Ten (10)	Desktop PC
Two (2)	Desktop PC
Nineteen (19)	Printer, Fax, Scanner and Copier (all-in-one)
Sixteen (16)	Win XP Professional OEM License (Service Pack 2)

Bidding Documents shall be issued upon payment of a non-refundable amount of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (Php 1,000.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

PROJECT NO. 2
DESCRIPTION : **SUPPLY OF IT EQUIPMENT**
LOCATION : **U.P. Complex, SAAC Building, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**
APPROVED BUDGET : **Php 820,000.00 (EJK Fund)**
PRE-BID CONFERENCE : **December 21, 2007, 2:00 p.m. Conference Room**
SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS : **January 11, 2008, 10:00 a.m. Conference Room**
SPECIFICATIONS :

No. of Units	Item Description
Two (2)	Desktop PC
One (1)	Server Machine
One (1)	Server Machine
Ten (10)	Small Form Factor PC with Built-in power supply
Ten (10)	Win XP Professional OEM License (Service Pack 2)

Bidding Documents shall be issued upon payment of a non-refundable amount of FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (**Php 500.00**). The Bidding Documents shall be received by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative.

Interested parties are advised to submit Letter of Intent and photocopy of their Latest Certificate of Registration of Business Name (with original for authentication) from December 17-19, 2007.

Eligibility Statement Forms shall be issued on **December 17-19, 2007**. Duly Accomplished Eligibility Statements shall be placed in a Sealed envelope and shall be submitted to the Chairman, CHR-BAC, Commission on Human Rights, SAAC Building, U.P. Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City from December 20-21, 2007.

Bid Documents shall be made available only to eligible bidders for issuance upon payment of fee at the BAC Secretariat, upon presentation of the original Certificate of Eligibility.

Bid Proposals shall be submitted in two (2) sealed brown envelopes with the name of the project to be bid and the name of the bidder in capital letters addressed to the Chairman of the CHR Bids and Awards Committee, SAAC Building, U.P. Complex Diliman, Quezon City. The "First Envelope" shall contain the accomplished Technical Statements and the "Second Envelope" shall contain the financial proposal.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Envaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The CHR reserves the right to reject any or all bids/eligibility statements to declare a failure of bidding if there is, among others, reason to waive any required formally in the bids received, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **COMM. ELIGIO P. MALLARI**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Dec. 12 & 16, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education (DepEd)
SECONDARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SEDIP)
National Project Management Office (NPMO)
5th Floor, Bonifacio Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City
Telephone Nos. 635-98-22; 631-0673; Telefax No. 635-9826

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : December 6, 2007
Loan No. : PH-P200

1. The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education (DepED) has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), in Japanese Yen towards financing the cost of Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for the supply and delivery of Furniture to selected Secondary Schools in the Philippines.
2. The DepED Division Offices, through their respective Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) invite sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of school furniture for classrooms, science laboratories, home economics, industrial arts, libraries, guidance and faculty rooms of the different secondary schools in the Division Offices of Leyte, Guimaras, Benguet and Surigao del Sur, following the schedules below:

Division Office	Time and Date			Venue	Telephone Number
	Issuance of Bid Documents	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Opening		
Leyte	Dec. 19-28, 2007	Jan. 4 2007; 10:00 am	Jan. 16, 2008; 10:00 am	Division Office of Leyte Palo, Leyte	(053)323-8682
Guimaras				Divison Office of Guimaras Jordan, Guimaras	(033)237-1032
Benguet				Divison Office of Benguet La Trinidad, Benguet	(074)309-3209
Surigao del Sur				Divison Office of Surigao del Sur, Tandag, Surigao del Sur	(086)211-2335

3. Bidders are required to submit bids for the complete quantities of all the furniture items intended for the selected schools in the Divisions of Leyte, Guimaras, Benguet and Surigao del Sur, per schedule of requirements of the Bidding Documents.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain complete information about the proposed projects upon submission of a Letter of Intent and acquire the bidding documents from the Division's Bids and Awards Committee (DBAC) Offices. Further inquiries may be directed at the telephone numbers listed in paragraph 2.
5. Bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting on the date stated in paragraph 2 upon payment to the Division Cashier of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00) only.
6. Sealed bids, together with the required bid security of equivalent percentage to the total bid amount as specified in ITB-7 page 5 of the Instructions to Bidders must be delivered to the Division Office at the time, date and place as indicated in paragraph 2. Said bids will be opened immediately for reading in public in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.
7. The Division BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informally therein and award the furniture packages to one or more bidders.

(Sgd.) **Sarah T. Apurillo**
DBAC Chairperson
Leyte

(Sgd.) **Maura F. Palt**
DBAC Chairperson
Guimaras

(Sgd.) **Carmelito R. Felix**
DBAC Co-Chairperson
Surigao del Sur

(Sgd.) **Glenn N. Duguis**
DBAC Chairperson
Benguet

(PDI–Dec. 16 & 23, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao Del Sur
Tandag City

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: December 16, 2007
Contract ID No: SP-127-EQ-01
World Bank Loan No: 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the Local Government Finance and Development (LOGOFIND) Project and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the ***SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL EQUIPMENTS AND MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS.*** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The ***PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR*** invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the ***SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL EQUIPMENTS AND MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS:***
    - 2.1) Lot A: Medical Equipments
    - 2.2) Lot B: Medical Instruments and Non-medical Equipments
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting ***December 17, 2007 – January 24, 2008*** during office hours ***from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*** at the ***Sub-Project Management Office, FABC Building, Capitol Hills, Tandag, Surigao del Sur,*** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Five Thousand Pesos Only (P5,000.00)*** or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ***ninety (90) days*** after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security of ***Php 140,000.00 for lot A and Php 95,000.00 for lot B*** in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee issued by commercial banks or its equivalent in a convertible currency and shall be delivered to the ***Office of the BAC Chairman/Provincial Administrator, Capitol Hills, Tandag, Surigao del Sur*** *on or before* ***January 24, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.*** at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. The Estimated Budget Cost is Philippine Peso:
    - Lot A : Two Million Seven Hundred Thirty One Thousand Twenty Pesos *(Php 2,731,020.00)*
    - Lot B : One Million Eight Hundred Sixty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Pesos *(Php 1,869,900.00)*
6. A pre-bid conference will be held on ***10:00 A.M. January 10, 2008*** at the ***Office of the Provincial Governor, Capitol Hills, Tandag City, Surigao del Sur.***

(Sgd.) **JOHNNY T. PIMENTEL**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–December 16, 2007)

PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION
(POEA)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION (POEA)**, through its Bids and Award Committee (BAC), invites qualified agencies, businesses and suppliers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following services and items below for the calendar year 2008.

Qualified bidders for the security services, janitorial services and administrative personnel, must be at least five (5) years in the business of providing such service.

ITEM/DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget Ceiling for the contract	DATE & TIME		Price of Bid Documents (Non-Refundable)
		Pre-BID Conference	Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bid Docs	
Drinking Water with H&C Dispenser (ITB 006-07)	P142,032.00	Dec. 28, 2007 10am - 11am	Jan. 11, 2008 10am - 11am	P150.00
Administrative Personnel (ITB 007-07)	P511,347.84	Dec. 28, 2007 11am - 12am	Jan. 11, 2008 11am - 12am	P500.00
Janitorial Services (ITB 008-07)	P3,845,905.90	Dec. 28, 2007 2pm - 3pm	Jan. 11, 2008 2pm - 3pm	P3,500.00
Security Services (ITB 009-07)	P7,128,000.00	Dec. 28, 2007 3pm - 4pm	Jan. 11, 2008 3pm - 4pm	P6,000.00

The Eligibility and Bid Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, 3rd Floor Blas F. Ople Bldg., Ortigas corner EDSA, Mandaluyong City, T:(02)7219481; F:(02)7243724; after payment for the Eligibility and Bid Documents. Only bidders who have purchased the Eligibility and Bid Documents shall be eligible to attend in the Pre-Bid Conference and participate in the bidding process.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation-A (IRR-A) as amended

The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

For Drinking Water with H&C Dispenser:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and to Bid	December 17, 2007
2. Issuance of Eligibility and Bid Documents	December 17, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	December 28, 2007, 10am
4. Receipt and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Documents	January 11, 2008, 10am

For Administrative Personnel:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and to Bid	December 17, 2007
2. Issuance of Eligibility and Bid Documents	December 17, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	December 28, 2007, 11am
4. Receipt and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Documents	January 11, 2008, 11am

For Janitorial Services:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and to Bid	December 17, 2007
2. Issuance of Eligibility and Bid Documents	December 17, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	December 28, 2007, 2pm
4. Receipt and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Documents	January 11, 2008, 2pm

For Security Services:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and to Bid	December 17, 2007
2. Issuance of Eligibility and Bid Documents	December 17, 2007
3. Pre-bid Conference	December 28, 2007, 3pm
4. Receipt and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Documents	January 11, 2008, 3pm

The POEA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **ATTY. HANS LEO J. CACDAC**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI–December 16, 2007)

CENTRAL PANGASINAN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Carlos City, Pangasinan
Tel. # (075) 532-2222 / 532-3146

INVITATION TO BID

The **Central Pangasinan Electric Cooperative, Inc.** (CENPELCO) with office address at Padilla St., San Carlos City, Pangasinan invites all qualified bidders for the supply and delivery of the following electrical materials and equipment;

I : **DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS:**
Distribution Transformer, Single, Phase, Pole Type,
60 Hz, Double Bushing with external tap changer.
Primary Voltage : 7620/13200Y Volts
Secondary Voltage : 120/240 Volts
Brand New

RATED CAPACITY	QUANTITY (Units)	Maximum Allowed Core Loss (Watt)	Maximum Allowed Copper Loss (Watt)
37.5 KVA	10	153	390
50 KVA	10	167	506

II : **CONDUCTORS**

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY
1. Duplex Wire #6	200,000 meters
2. Duplex Wire #1/0	20,000 meters
3. Bare Ware, ACSR # 2/0	20,000 meters

Please submit bids/proposals for the supply and delivery of the above items on or before 2:00 PM (1400 hrs.) on December 20, 2007 (Thursday) at CENPELCO main office wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representative/s.

Request further to include in your sealed bids/proposals the delivery date, terms of payment, availability of stock, warranty period and brand for evaluation purposes. Bid for one or two items only is acceptable. Please submit BID BOND equivalent to two and one-half percent (2-1/2%) of the total bid price if it is a cash or manager's check or if it is a surety bond it must be equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

CENPELCO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS THE BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) **RODRIGO F. CORPUZ**
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **JOSEFINA D. MANDAPAT**
General Manager

(PDI – December 15 & 16, 2007)

CALL POEA 24-HOUR HOTLINES **722-1144 or 722-1155**

Pamaskong Handog 2007

PAMASKONG HANDOG IS AN annual program of DOLE-OWWA held every December in recognition of the Overseas Filipino Workers' (OFWs) valuable contributions to national development. This year's theme is "DOLE-OWWA: Kaagapay Sa Iyong Pagbabalik," focusing on the reintegration program of the government.

The program has several components, the highlight of which is the Presidential Pasalubong by Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, with vacationing OFWs at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) - Terminal 1.

Complementing the Presidential Pasalubong is the daily celebrity welcome at Terminals 1 and 2 from Dec. 10 to 24. Popular movie and TV personalities (courtesy of Globe Telecom) will greet vacationing OFWs and distribute give-aways.

The scheduled salubong at the international airports are Davao (Dec. 12), Clark (Dec. 18), and Cebu (Dec. 19). VP Noli de Castro, Secretary Edgardo Pamintuan, and Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, and some other important personalities have been invited to grace the activities in Cebu, Clark, and Davao, respectively. Lucky OFWs will also receive special prizes.

Other components of the Pamaskong Handog are the Family Day for dependents of OFWs and the Pamaskong Salo-salo para sa OFWs. These two events and games for families of OFWs.

The Salo-salo, on the other hand, is held in a barangay where an OFW family, that is financially hard up, resides. The choice of family is based on recommendation of existing OFW family circles in the area. LGUs and other partners. The idea is to give special gifts to the chosen family (ala "Wish Ko Lang") such as kabuhayan package and/or financial assistance, medicines for a sick family member, etc. The OFWs and local officials in that barangay break bread with the selected family in a traditional salo-salo.

The program is carried out in cooperation with the Manila International Airport Authority, Bureau of Customs, and the Commission on Immigration.

Feng Shui: More than just lucky charms

HOW DO YOU EMBRACE CHANGE?

Most Filipinos like to dwell on their comfort zone, where there are no hassles, no risks, and no regrets. These people wear rose-tinted glasses and perfectly suit themselves in cold comfort. However, no matter how one avoids change, it still lingers inevitably powered by invisible energies surrounding us.

Such is the underlining premise of Feng Shui, the art and science of placement that harmonizes life and personal growth through the balance of energy omnipresent in the environment. Literally meaning "wind and water," Feng Shui greatly influences physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels of a person by attracting all the positive energies and driving away negative elements from one's environment to gain good fortune.

MARITES Allen

Whether you renovate or reconstruct your residence, start a business, get married or build a new career, Feng Shui is believed to be the hidden and mysterious force behind the success or failure that come with them.

Marites Allen, a certified Feng Shui expert and President and CEO of World of Feng Shui Philippines, surmised that the positive energies, or chi, are manipulated and arranged by one's surroundings so that it would flow efficiently.

"These unseen energies usually reside in the wind and the water that affect the environment as a whole," Allen shared. "But what a lot of people don't know is that we also carry our own energies."

"That's why there are times when people have mood swings. They are lively one minute and scowling the other. These changes are not affected by spiritual beings, as folklore meant to advertise."

Allen also explains that Feng Shui highlights the balance between the yin and the yang, believed to be descriptions of complimentary opposites that produce constant movement in the universe. As a result, Feng Shui helps someone live with the harmony of his surroundings. Balanced energy in the environment, according to Allen, is the reason why people usually get different feelings toward a house, a person or a situation.

For more than 12 years of practicing Feng Shui, Allen has witnessed the development of Feng Shui fanaticism from just a popular belief to an essential part of life. Whilst most people think that the monopoly of Feng Shui knowledge is only given to the privileged Chinese, Allen confirmed that Filipinos also have taken fixation and even devotion to the ancient art and science. In fact, Allen believes that Filipinos are very adept at it because we are natural survivors of fate changes and challenges in life.

"We have survived storms and national crises so many times than any other nation and yet we are able to mingle and be at par with the best of the world. That is one great indication of how we try to make use of the positive energies to change our lives for the better," Allen accounts.

Feng Shui isn't the answer to all our problems, Allen concludes, but it is a reliable guide to a better direction according to the natural order of things. The knowledge eventually helps us take on the changes around us and make something positive out of them.

On Jan. 19, Marites Allen and World of Feng Shui Philippines will spearhead the 2008 Philippines Feng Shui Updates at the Grand Ballroom of Renaissance Hotel, Makati City to prepare for good fortune and new opportunities in the coming of the Year of the Rat. For more information, call the WOFS hotline at 914-7888/412-6888; text 0920-9509390, or e-mail inquiries to philippines@worldoffengshui.com or log on to www.wofs.com.

Panasonic WHEEL-A-HOPE 2007

PANASONIC WHEEL-A-HOPE 2007

Panasonic Manufacturing Philippines Corp (PMPC), which recently marked its 40th anniversary, organized the Panasonic Wheel-A-Hope 2007 in partnership with Taytay Bukas Buhay Inc (TBBI). The event was carried out to create awareness in addressing the need for the integration of persons with disabilities into the mainstream of the society. Shown are the winners proudly exhibiting their wheels (from left): Dominador Agarin (2nd runner up-open class male), Norlito Naval (champion - open class male), Remigio Lobos (1st runner up - open class male), Emerlito Lucas (1st Runner Up - junior class male), Leonila Daz (champion - open class female), Rosemarie Falco (2nd runner up female), Rhoderic Lita (champion - junior class male), Marichu Peralta (1st runner up - open class female), and Rafael Mina Jr (2nd runner up - junior class male). Also shown are the PMPC volunteers led by PMPC director Miguel Castro, and TBBI members. Established in 1967, PMPC is the first Filipino-Japanese joint venture operation in the area of consumer electronics in the Philippines.

years
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MDH BESTOWS 2007 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH), Manila's premiere healthcare institution, recently launched the MDH Awards for Excellence and awarded the first batch of winners during its 51st anniversary celebration. The MDH Awards for Excellence gives formal recognition to medical and non-medical staff who has been cited for excellence by external agencies. This is part of its ongoing program to promote a culture of excellence in Manila Doctors Hospital. Shown are (seated, from left): Dr. Eva Ma. C. Cutiongco-de la Paz, Dr. Charlotte M. Chiong, Dr. Clemente M. Amante, Dr. Antonio C. Oposa, Antonio Abacan, chair, Metrobank, (representing George SK Ty), Dr. Augusto D. Litonjua, Dr. Carmencita D. Padilla, Dr. Eric SM Talens and Dr. Willy T. Ong. Standing: Dr. Dante Morales, MDH medical director; Arthur Ty, president, Metrobank; Dr. Placido Mapa Jr, vice president, Metrobank Foundation; lawyer Pilar Almira, MDH hospital director; Aniceto Sobrepeña, MDH president; Antony Maughan, president, Metrobank Card Corp, and Elvira T. Chan, director, Manila Medical Services Inc.

PKBC INAUGURATES NEW OFFICE IN TAGUIG CITY

Philippine Koyo Bearing Corp (PKBC) inaugurates its new headquarters at One World Square Building in McKinley Town Center, Taguig City with Senator Loren Legarda as guest of honor. Operating in the Philippines for 32 years now with a bearing manufacturing plant in Malvar, Batangas for domestic and export requirements, PKBC's vision is to 'be a technology-oriented company able to move industries, the times, and people's hearts.' PKBC is a joint venture between JTEKT Corp of Japan and The Carlos Palanca Group (The CP Group). Shown receiving a mahogany seedling from Legarda as a symbol of the growing Japanese investments in the Philippines is Kazuro Kajiwara, executive director of JTEKT Corp. Legarda is an environmentalist and recipient of the United Nations Environment Program Award in 2001 for her project Luntiang Pilipinas (Green Philippines). As Chair of the Senate Economic Affairs Committee, Legarda also expressed her support to foreign companies that would invest and operate in the Philippines. Also shown (from left) are: Sylvia Palanca-Quirino and Dang Cecilio-Palanca of The CP Group; Hisashi Matsumoto, chair, Philippine Koyo Bearing Corp; Yukinobu Hirano, general manager, JTEKT Corp; Masahiro Hoshino, managing director, Koyo Singapore; Carlos Palanca III, chair of The CP Group; Antonio Quirino III, president, Philippine Koyo Bearing Corp; and Carlos Palanca IV, director, The CP Group.

Convergys wins award for consulting services

CONVERGYS CORP (NYSE:CVG), a global leader in customer care, human resources, and billing services, announced recently it has received the Market Leader Award from Speech Technology Magazine. The Market Leader Award specifically recognizes Convergys as a leader in the consulting services category, notably for its work with the United States Postal Services (USPS).

Enhancements for USPS

Convergys has implemented several important call automation enhancements for USPS, including speech recognition and tuning, to increase the number of calls resolved through automated applications.

These changes have resulted in a 30-percent increase in call containment rates, and the system handles over 60 million calls annually. One specific internal speech application created more than $10 million in annual savings and cut misdirected calls from 21,000 to four or less per month.

"We are honored that our speech solutions and our consulting expertise were recognized by Speech Technology Magazine," said Andrea Ayers, Convergys business unit president. "Speech automation is a key component of our overall customer management solution portfolio that optimizes our clients' customer and employee relationships."

"Convergys' work with the USPS demonstrates Convergys' commitment to delivering solutions that drive customer value," said Daniel Hong, lead analyst, Datamonitor's Customer Interaction Technologies.

Speech Technology Magazine's Market Leader Award honors companies that have led the industry over the past 12 months in specific categories based on polls conducted with leading industry analysts and consultants.

"Only the most dedicated individuals and innovative products and implementations are recognized each year at our SpeechTEK conference," said David Myron, the magazine's editor-in-chief. "Expectations are very high and the industry only recognizes those accomplishments that truly stand out."

Speech recognition expertise

Convergys combines a legacy of contact center and speech recognition expertise with a thorough understanding of how to apply automation to meet the demands of a business and improve its customer experience. Convergys speech portfolio supports deployments of on-premise, managed service, or hosted solutions, from an initial assessment through application deployment, all delivered by the industry's most experienced team.

To support increasing client demand for more technology enablement of the customer and employee service experience, Convergys has formed a new relationship technology management group to accelerate the development of technology-enabled solutions that improve the quality and value of interactions across live agent and self-care channels.

This group will leverage the latest advanced technologies in speech automation and web-based self-care, enhanced with analytics to capture and analyze intelligence from the interactions.

Warcraft exhibit

THE DOT AND Intramuros Administration recently opened Vintage Warcraft, an exhibit of scale models of World War II weapons and equipment at the Intramuros Visitor Center in Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. For inquiries, call 527-2961 or 527-3138.

An Eee PC sold every 2 seconds!

THE ASUS EEE PC WAS OFFICIALLY released Oct. 16 in Taiwan amid great fanfare and tremendous user response. More than 300 reporters attended the global launch event, which witnessed the official launch of this groundbreaking notebook. Just like the Wii of gaming consoles and the Ipod of MP3s, the Eee PC is becoming synonymous with the Internet.

Sales figures since the release have been astounding, with 200 pieces snapped up in 20 minutes on Taiwan's shopping channel, ETTV Shopping-averaging an Eee PC sold every two seconds! Other sales channels have also been bombarded with orders, like Yahoo, which started sales at 17:00, and ending sales 3-and-a-half minutes later at 17:03:30. That's 50 Eee PCs in just 210 seconds-averaging one Eee PC sold every 4.2 seconds! Taiwanese 3C Company Tsann Kuen reported sales of 99 pieces of Eee PCs in 30 minutes; while PC Home Online also reported sales of more than 200 Eee PCs shortly after it was publicly available.

The Eee PC's hot response comes with great user expectation of the simple and portable device. It is focused on providing users with the most comprehensive Internet applications based on three Es: Easy to learn, work, play; Excellent Internet experience and Excellent on-the-Go.

Compact and highly portable at 7" and only 0.92kg in weight-providing an Internet experience like never before. It is also very easy to use, with two modes of intuitive graphic user interface design to accommodate both experienced and inexperienced PC users. The Eee PC is also Windows XP compatible, and comes with over 40 built-in applications to offer a dynamic computing experience to learn, work and play!

Windsor Mansion: Ready for occupancy

CITYLAND ONCE AGAIN DElivers as promised.

The 2007 Leading Condominium Developer National Awardee (Office of the President, HUDCC-HLURB) is pleased to announce the turnover of Windsor Mansion Dec. 13.

Windsor Mansion, an 8-story residential condominium, is located right along Evangelista Avenue, Santolan, Pasig City. It's just a few minutes away from Eastwood City, Shopwise, malls such as Robinsons and SM branches; popular schools such as Ateneo, the University of the Philippines and Miriam College.

Basic amenities include a common clubhouse, a swimming pool and 24-hour association security.

Unit owners can now celebrate their Yuletide festivities right in their brand new homes. Investors can now easily lease out their units providing them with additional income to look forward to this coming new year.

Economically designed 1, 2, 3-bedroom units are available in cash or easy installment terms of up to 10 years to pay. For more details, call Cityland at 812-2222 (Makati); 242-1212 (Manila); 687-3333 (Ortigas); 567-3333 (Vito Cruz). Log on to www.cityland.net.

'Follow the Christ' of Jehovah's Witnesses

APPROXIMATELY 16,000 DELEGATES from 160 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in southeastern Metro Manila, Laguna, Cavite, and Batangas will attend the extended worldwide series of their "Follow the Christ" district conventions from December to January at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Victoria, Laguna. The four consecutive conventions in Laguna are respectively scheduled from Dec. 14 to 16, 21 to 23, 28 to 30 and Jan. 4 to 6. These are four of the 76 "Follow the Christ" conventions that are due in 56 cities and towns throughout the Philippines, from November through January. The convention theme highlights Jesus Christ as the model for all true Christians. Program sessions start at 8:20 a.m. each of the three days of the convention. Admission is free and no collection shall be taken.

Sunday **LIFESTYLE**

Exclusives

Editorial Director **Cheche V. Moral**

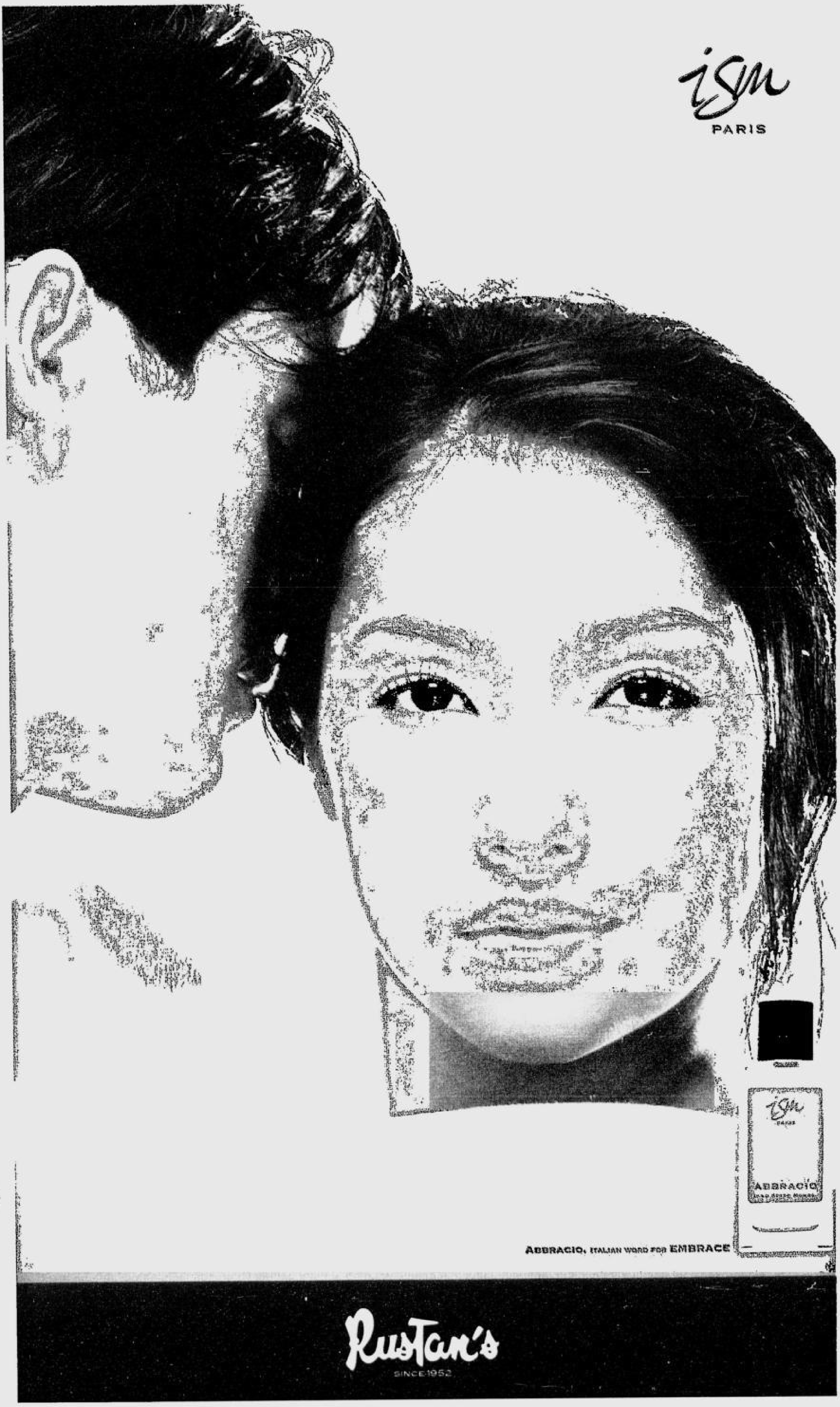
Guest Editor **Inno Sotto**

I grew up
believing
everything about
Christmas...

..I grew up
believing in
Christmas
wishes

Whispered
in
the heart
& the gift of

answered
prayers.


ism
PARIS
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PARIS
ABBRACIO
ABBRACIO, ITALIAN WORD FOR EMBRACE
Rustan's
SINCE 1952

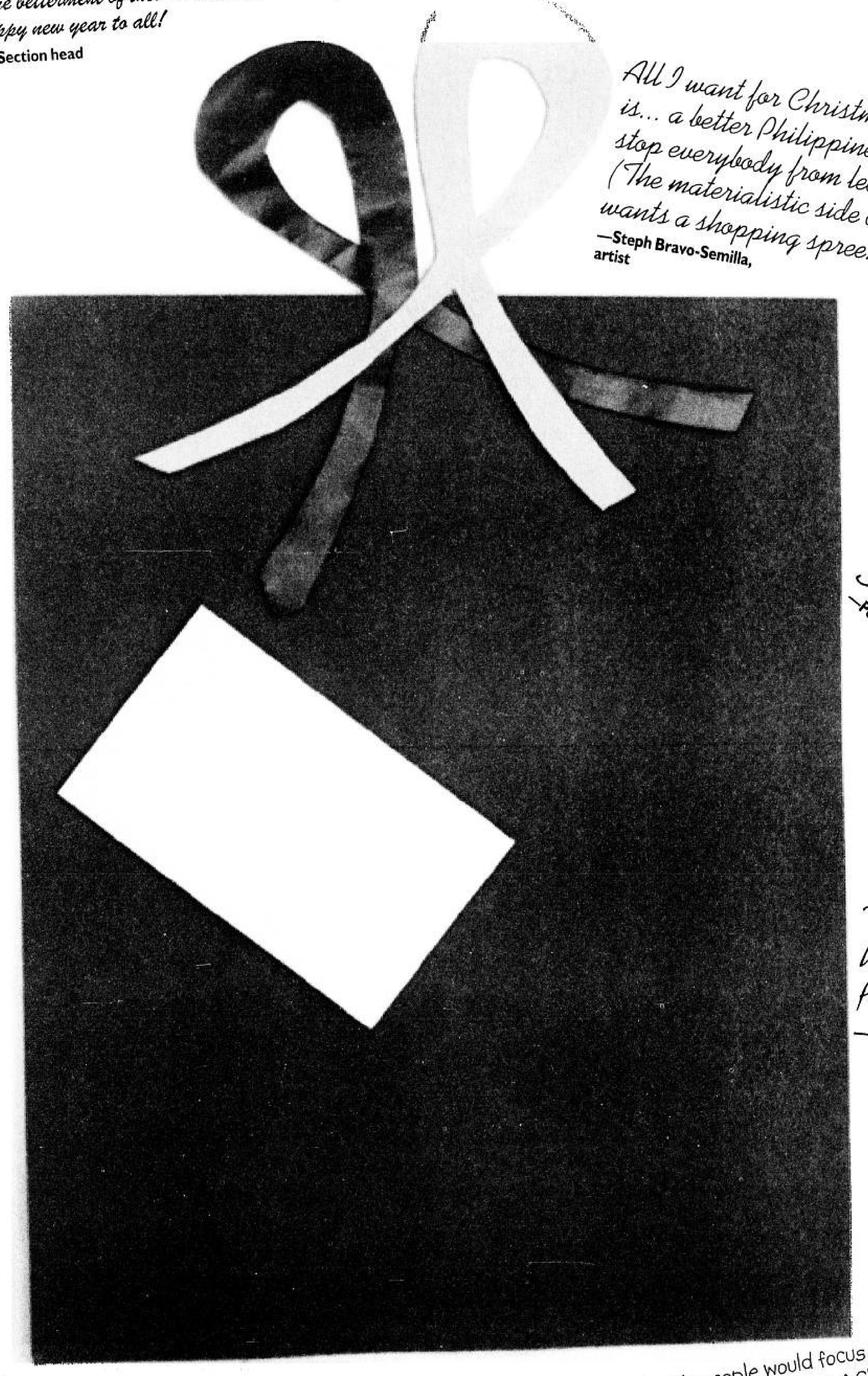
Exclu

My wish is to see our desperate and unfortunate brethren with smile on their faces not only during this season, but also in their everyday living. May our government prioritize the needs of the less fortunate rather than spend so much time and finances on dealing with controversies, which remain unresolved or forgotten. Nobody continuously attends to how the poorest of the poor survive and live. May the Lord touch the hearts of those in power to plan for the betterment of their constituents. Merry Christmas and happy new year to all!

—Becky Canlas, Billing Section head

For all entrepreneurs to practice the dictum of "doing well in business while doing good for the community." A great start would be paying the right wages.

—Margie Quimpo-Espino, Business Features editor



All I want for Christmas is... a better Philippines, to stop everybody from leaving! (The materialistic side of me wants a shopping spree.)

—Steph Bravo-Semilla, artist

I could wish for a grander life, but I'd rather wish for the absence of suffering among children everywhere. I hate to see children suffer especially as I have a child of my own.

—Louie Bacani, Editorial Applications specialist

A green world. Food for the hungry. United Philippines. Education for less privileged Filipinos. Livelihood for the Reming victims in Albay. Twenty-five percent growth for Inquirer JM and Classifieds. Trip to Rome for me and my mom. Bonsai or toy dog for me.

—Jesse Rebustillos, AVP for Classifieds

May there be reform and stability in the country and the company. May football/futsal gain more local following. May I lose 20 more pounds on the way to bombshell-hood (if not, a Marc Jacobs Stam bag is a fair tradeoff). May lovers dwell in passion. And oh, may there be more of everything Filipino—music, fashion, art, literature—it's high time we gain an identity.

—Irene C. Perez, editorial production assistant

I wish people would focus less on the commercialization of Christmas and put more meaning into the celebration, which is birth of Baby Jesus!

—Mylene de Jesus, sales officer

I wish that my son and my nephew (Lulliboy and Dongdong) would grow up in a better world than it is today, where there are f
er conflicts, fewer problems, fewer headaches, cleaner air, more bea
ful sunrises and even better sunsets. And I wish that they realize
dreams, whatever these may be. And if the world would turn out s
much like what it is today, I wish they would help find solutions rather than contribute to its problems.

—Chito de la Vega, editor, Libre

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something.
—Perlita Muli, audit assistant

All I wish f
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may love and
heart not on
for a lifetim
—Invicratus Valencia, ch

I wish to
nice dress
my 2-year
ter (Tern
—Jenny C. Roa, Credit
Circulation

sives

only Christmas wish this
r is for Tessa
alazar)'s pets (3 cats and
logs) to talk to her and
nvince her to marry me
xt year. Hohoho!

es Espinosa, editor, People Events & Places

I wish for forgiveness.
And the chance to do
something that mat-
ters.

Fran Katigbak, editorial production assistant

Only one
wish—peace of
mind!

—Tintin Asuncion-Dio, account executive

y wish is for that special someone,
otector, my comforter, my best
my sweetest adorable koala
the find his TRUE PAS-
LF and finally prove, if only
the DOES amount to

or is the reconciliation
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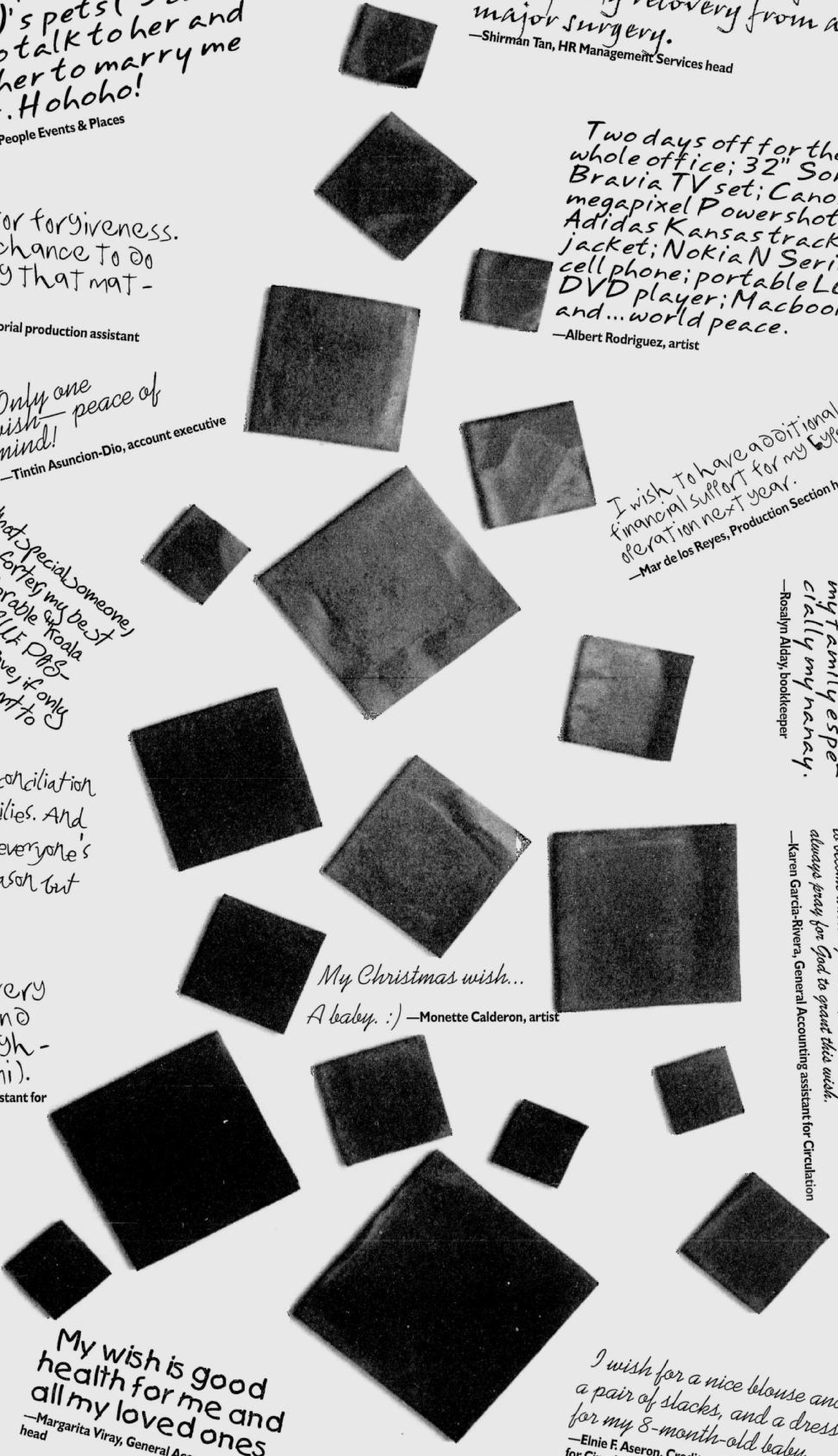


My wish is good
health for me and
all my loved ones.

—Margarita Viray, General Accounting Section head

My Christmas wish...
A baby. :) **—Monette Calderon, artist**

I wish for my best friend's
mom a complications-free
and speedy recovery from a
major surgery.

—Shirman Tan, HR Management Services head

Two days off for the
whole office; 32" Sony
Bravia TV set; Canon 7
megapixel Powershot;
Adidas Kansas track
jacket; Nokia N Series
cell phone; portable LCD
DVD player; Macbook
and... world peace.

—Albert Rodriguez, artist

I wish to have additional
financial support for my bypass
operation next year.

—Mar de los Reyes, Production Section head

Good health for
my family espe-
cially my nanay.

—Rosalyn Alday, bookkeeper

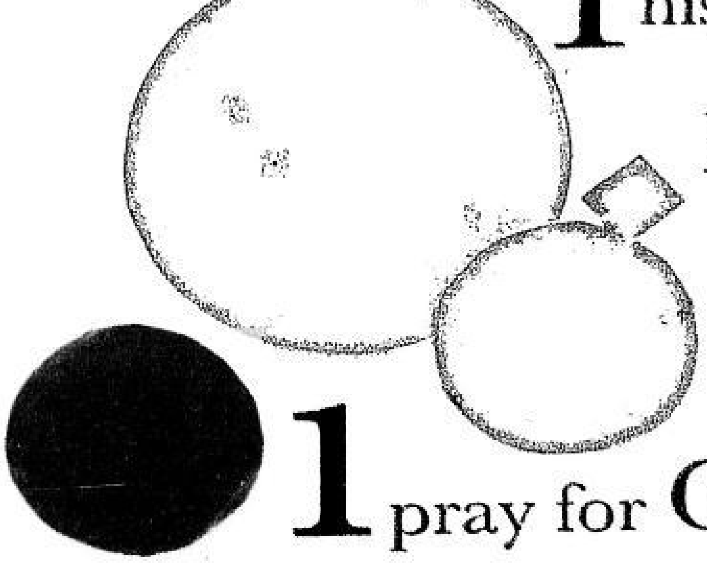
I wish this Christmas for the family of my older sister to become whole again; they've lived apart for years. I always pray for God to grant this wish.

—Karen Garcia-Rivera, General Accounting assistant for Circulation

I wish for a nice blouse and
a pair of slacks, and a dress
for my 8-month-old baby.

—Elnie F. Aseron, Credit and Collection assistant for Circulation

Exclusives

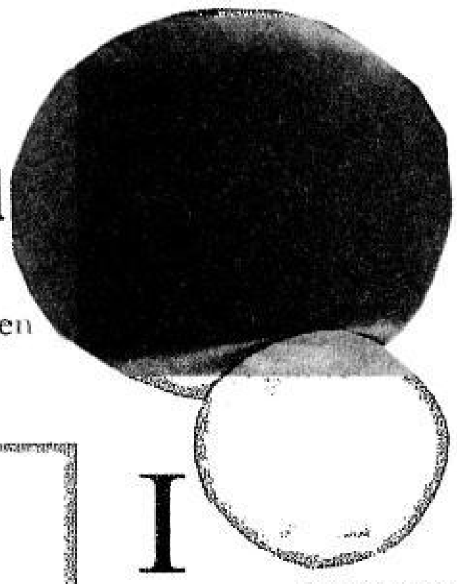


This is my Christmas wish list for all…

I pray for those who do not BELIEVE

I pray for the world to be reached

I pray for God's will to be done as in heaven



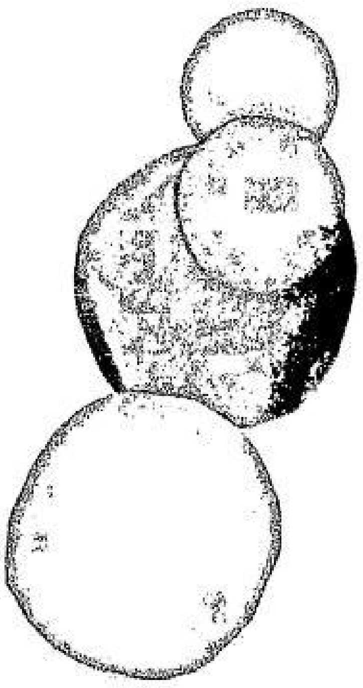
I pray for forgiveness

& grace to abound

i pray for the sick,

needy

and broken people



I pray for children

I pray

your answered prayers

Are your

CHRISTMAS WISHES.

LAYOUT PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN, NINO JESUS ORBETA

The tradition of luxury lives on...

AG JEANS
ALFRED DUNHILL
ANNICK GOUTAL
ANTIK DENIM
AWAKE
BALLY
BCBG MAX AZRIA
BOBBI BROWN
BOTKIER
BULGARI
BURBERRY
CARTIER
CHANEL
CHARRIOL
CHOPARD
CHRISTIAN DIOR
CLARINS
CLINIQUE
COMPTOIR SUD PACIFIQUE
CREED
DENIM BY VICTORIA BECKHAM
DERMALOGICA
DIPTYQUE
DKNY
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA
ERNST BENZ
ESTEE LAUDER
FENDI
FRANCK MULLER
FRANCOIS NARS
FRETTE
FURLA
GIORGIO FEDON 1919
ISABELLA FIORE
J BRAND
JUICY COUTURE
KARTELL
KATE SPADE
L'ARTISAN PARFUMEUR
L'OCCITANE
LA MER
LA PRAIRIE
LALIQUE
LANCOME
LAURA MERCIER
LOEFFLER RANDALL
LONGCHAMP
MANUEL CANOVAS
MARIO BADESCU
MIKIMOTO
MONTBLANC
MURAD
NICOLE MILLER
ORIGINS
PIAGET
PIANEGONDA
RAFE
RALPH LAUREN
ROBBE & BERKING
ROBERTO COIN
ROCK & REPUBLIC
RODO
SALVATORE FERRAGAMO
SHU UEMURA
SISLEY
SWAROVSKI
TADASHI
TAMARA COMOLLI
THE ORGANIC PHARMACY
THIERRY MUGLER
TIFFANY & CO.
TIGERLILY
TOM FORD EYEWEAR
VACHERON CONSTANTIN
VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
VIVIENNE TAM

COMING IN SUMMER '08: ADAM PLUS EVE, ANTIK BATIK, BOTTEGA VENETA, CHARLOTTE RONSON,
DIANE VON FURSTENBERG, EARNEST SEWN, FRATELLI ROSSETTI, GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI DESIGN
GUCCI, HELMUT LANG, HOGAN, JOHN VARVATOS, KOOBA, LAMB BY GWEN STEFANI
MAGNANNI, MANOLO BLAHNIK, POLLINI, SERGIO ROSSI, SIGERSON MORRISON, TARA JARMON, TIBI, YSL

Rustan's
SINCE 1952

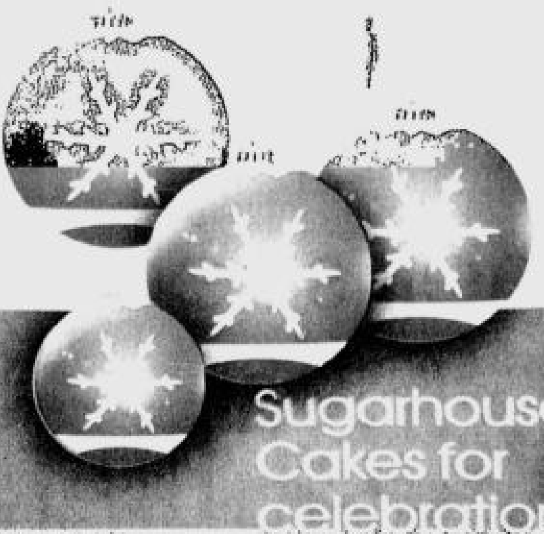
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LIFESTYLE

A merry MEGA food trip

IT HAS STARTED TO LOOK A LOT LIKE Christmas at SM Megamall. Halls glisten with candy canes, lanes are aglow with gold and silver trimmings, and a giant Christmas tree greets shoppers. Toys and gifts are in every store, including dolls and boots wished for by every child. Soon the bells will signal the start of carols by the lovely choir at the event center.

But before the ringing of Christmas puts a happy strain on every tired shopper hopping from shop to shop, SM Megamall restaurants offer a food haven and sanctuary for shoppers. Be it hearty meals that bring comfort and joy, pastries and cakes that satisfy every sweet tooth craving, or feast grand enough for gatherings, food gifts of every kind, color and box, the restaurants and food destinations at SM Megamall have something for everyone this Christmas. Have yourself a very "mega" food trip at SM Megamall.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS



Sugarhouse: Cakes for celebration

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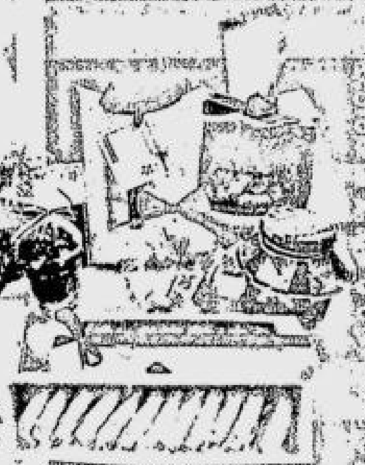
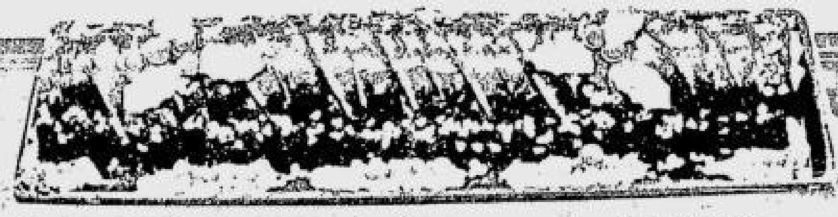


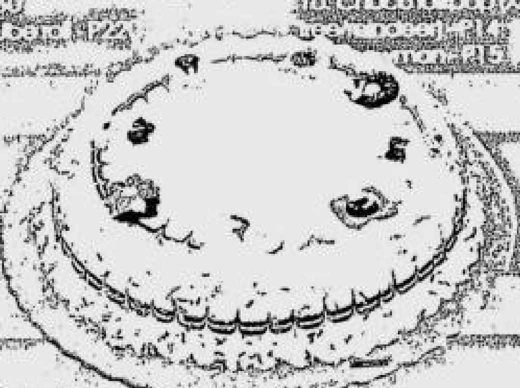
[illegible] (P285) and [illegible]

Creamy Goldilocks

[illegible]

Holiday Treats





Dulcinea: Ola Spanish food

DULCINEA, the restaurant that popularized Spanish fare, has the good old chorizo bilbao, chorizo Pamplona, Jamon Serrano, sobrasada, and the specialty of the house -churos con chocolate, deep fried dough dipped in rich Spanish chocolate.

This season of gift giving, Dulcinea offers 170 products in its cake and pastry section ideal for gifts-starting with fruitcake that comes with generous servings of glazed fruits.

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SM Megamall, second level, Bridgeway, building B. Tel. No. 6340612.

Red Ribbon

[illegible]

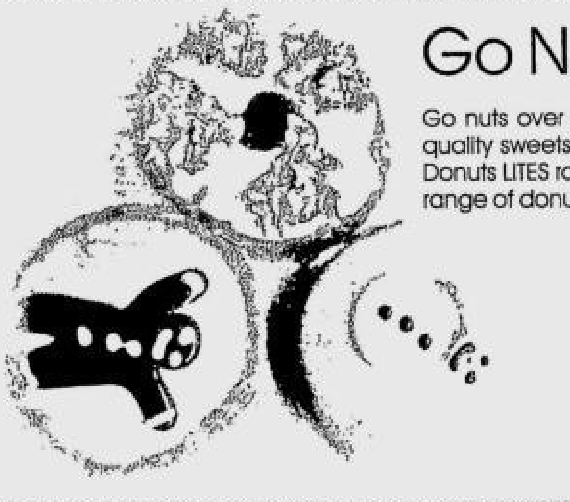
Choco caramel and chocolate cake - P435 (round), P209 (rectangle)

[illegible]

… craving

[illegible]

Go Nuts Donuts state



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Located at the Upper Ground Level, Building A. Call 637-1406.

Sugarnot: Sweet indulgence sans the calories

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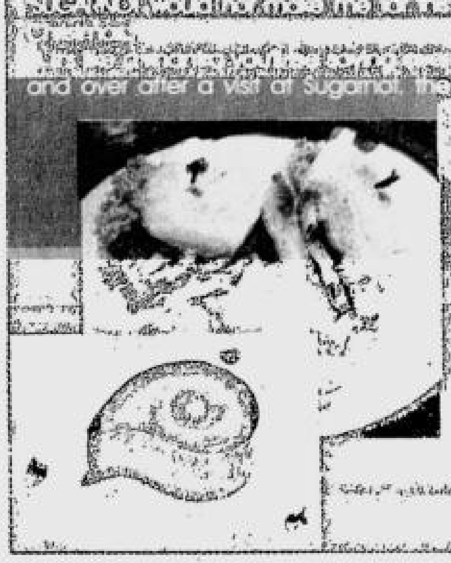
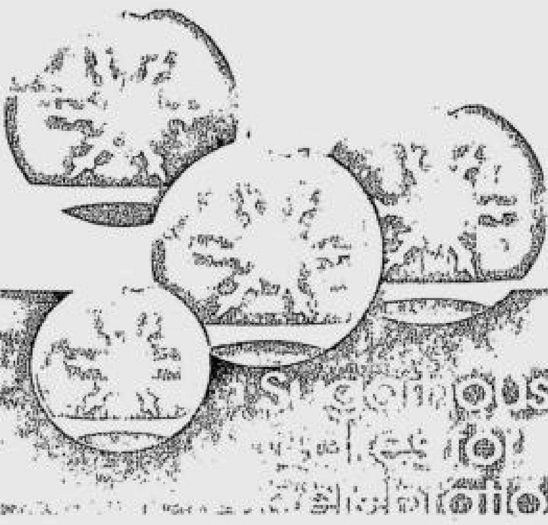


Brownies Unlimited delights

[illegible]

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday LifeStyle

A merry MEGA food trip



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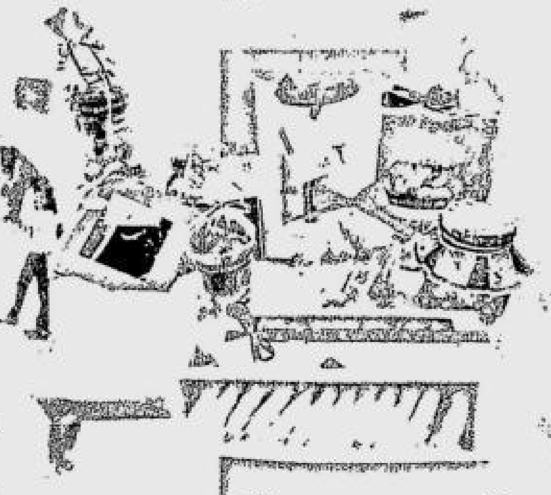
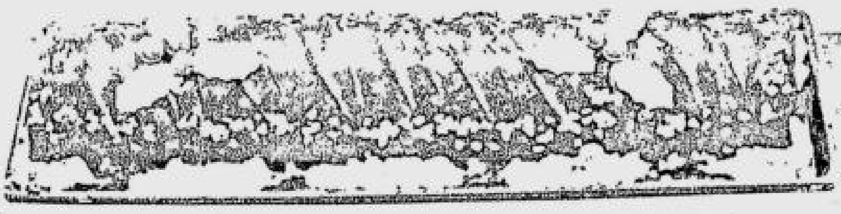
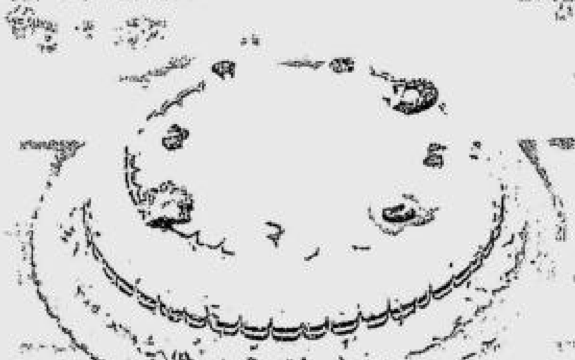


Creamy Celebrations

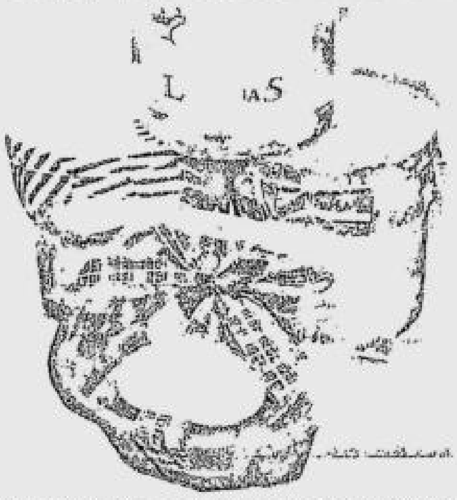
PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

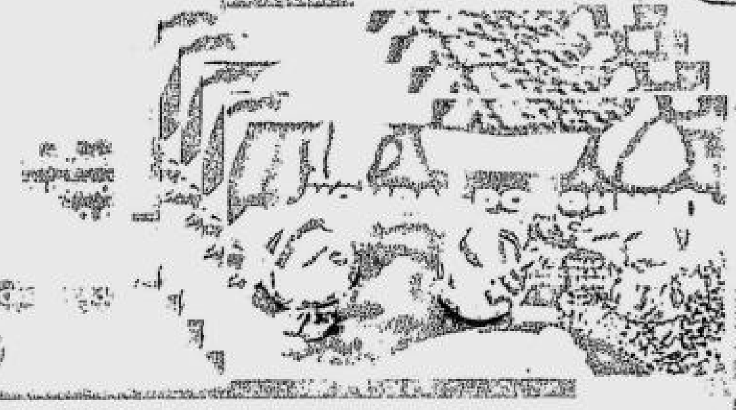
Holiday Treats





Dulcinea: Ola Spanish food





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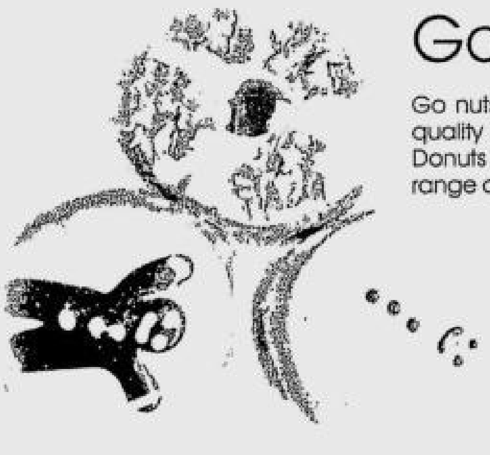
SM Megamall, second level, Bridgeway, building B. Tel. No. 6340612.



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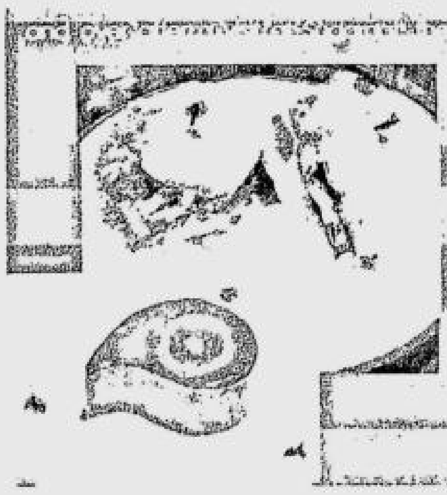
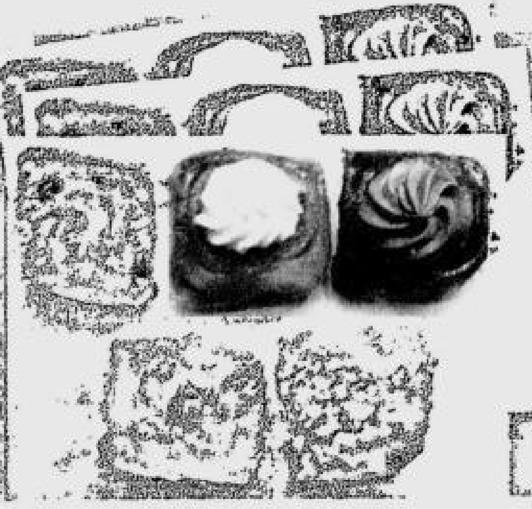


[illegible]

Brownies Unlimited delights



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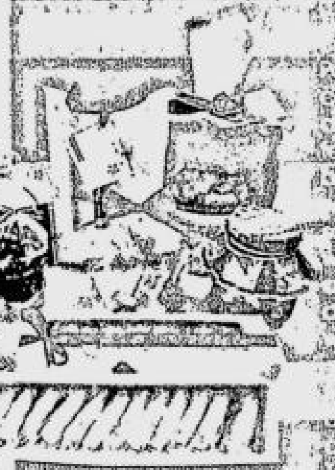
PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

Sugarhouse: Cakes for celebration

[illegible] chocolate truffle (P275), honey cake (P485), [illegible]



[illegible]

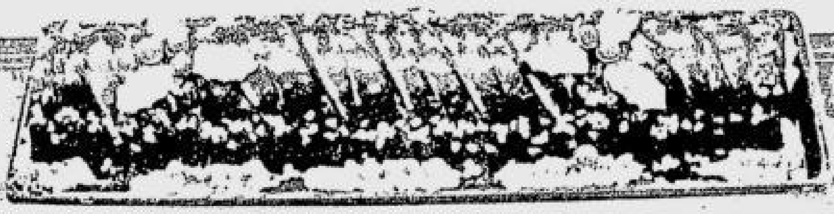
Creamy Goldilocks

[illegible] at the Upper Ground Level, Building B. Call 633-5009.

Get the following cakes and pastries from Goldilocks: [illegible]

[illegible]

Holiday Treats



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SM Megamall, second level, Bridgeway, building B. Tel. No. 6340612.

Red Ribbon [illegible]

Red Ribbon cakes and pastries have become [illegible] part of Filipino Christmas. Celebrate the joy of the season with these mouth[illegible]

[illegible]

Krispy Kreme craving

[illegible]

Go Nuts Donuts state

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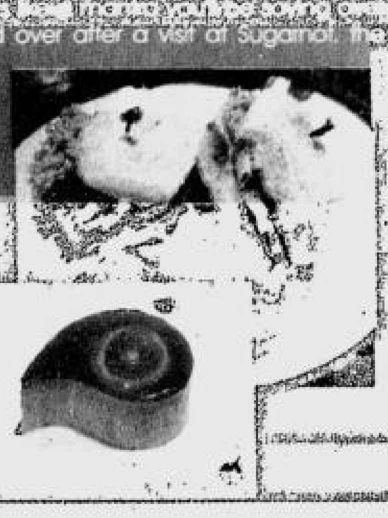
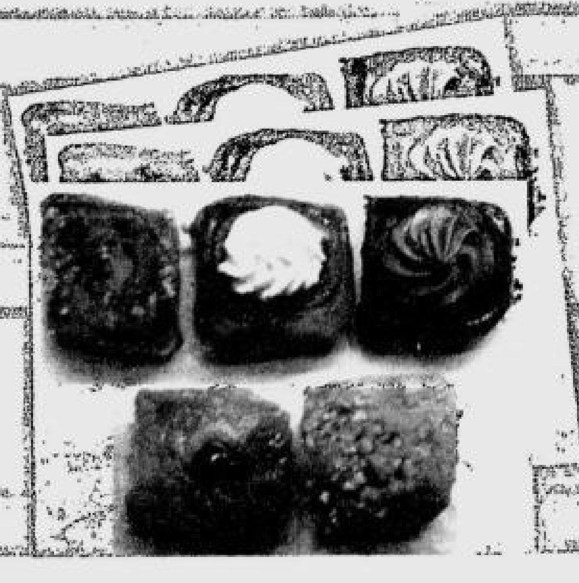
[illegible] and over after a visit at Sugarnot: the [illegible] feast of sweets but without the excessive calorie load [illegible] concerned about their figure, cholesterol and sugar levels, Sugarnot is the place to indulge themselves in [illegible]

[illegible]



Brownies Unlimited delights



[illegible]

Caramel fudge cake - P165.00

[illegible]

All time family favorites

- their specials or packages for the season

Dads and Kamayan Take-out Noche Buena feast

THE PLACE that popularized buffet dining and brought the Filipinos' food craving to the next level, Dads has thought of how to make holiday gatherings truly filling and special. It now offers its popular dishes for take-out in time for the Noche Buena gatherings.

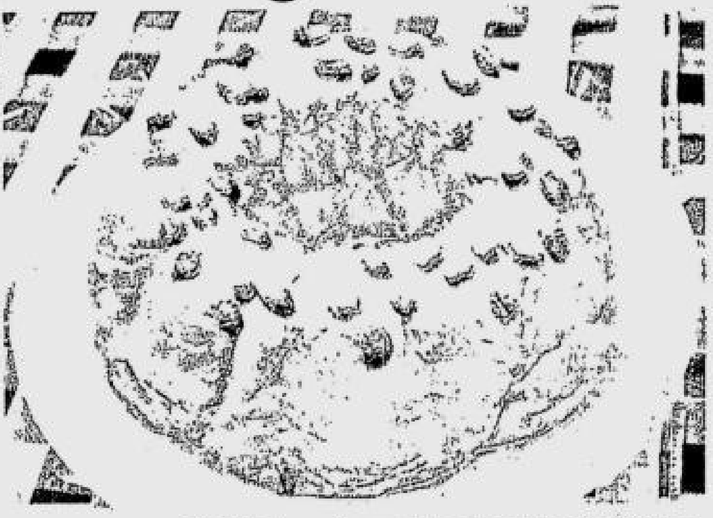
Dads' take-out Noche Buena feast: roast beef (Certified Angus beef, P3,248/kilo; minimum of seven kilos; Australian roast beef, P1,680/kilo; Dads' ham, P784/kilo, [illegible] kilos; Roast turkey, P840/kilo; [illegible] Lengua, P1,064; Dads Callos, P1,003; Dads' [illegible] P952.

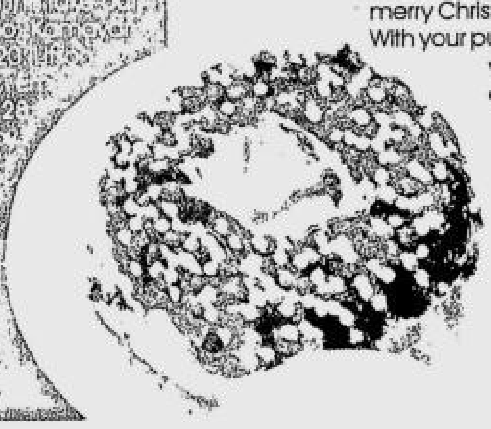
For traditional Filipino dishes, Kamayan offers [illegible] Noche Buena fare: Lechon de leche, P750/kilo; Kamayan bagoong in Garlic Sauce (good for four), P320; [illegible] Lemon [illegible] P448/kilo; Mechadong Karne, P728; [illegible] P504; Pork Barbecue (20 pieces), P728; Chicken Barbecue (20 pieces), P740; [illegible] P336; Pancit [illegible] P560; [illegible] P219; and Bibingka per piece, P74.

Kamayan eat-all-you-can be enjoyed for only P525 with free lechon [illegible]. Dads eat-all-you-can meals from Monday to [illegible] day can be enjoyed for only P465 [illegible] P580.

SM Megamall, 4th floor, bridgeway. Tel. No. 6363785 or 6331758.

Italianni's merry tea rings





SPREAD rings of good cheer and make it truly a merry Christmas for the children of Bantay Bata. With your purchase of Merry Tea Rings, Italianni's will donate P10 to ABS-CBN's Foundation's Bantay Bata 163.

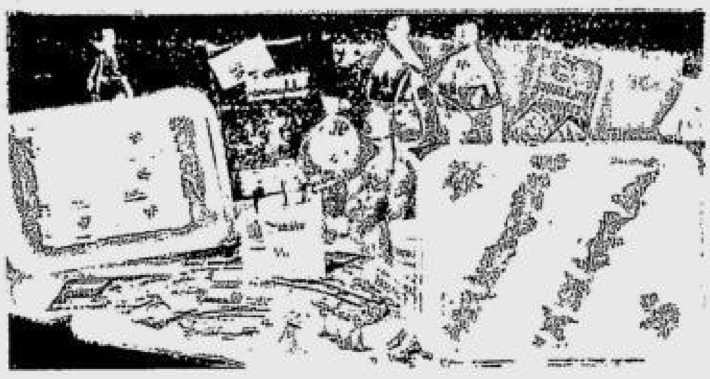
Merry Tea Rings cost only P395 each. Choose from mocha almond, cinnamon raisin, chocolate chip or classic. For bulk orders of five boxes or more, please order one day in advance. Call 637-3718 or visit Italianni's at the Upper Ground Level, Building A.

Sbarro: Italian fare

SBARRO is the world's leading quick service Italian restaurant which offers a broad menu that includes pizza, pastas, salads, desserts and other Italian foods. Its deep Italian roots date back three generations to Naples, Italy and later Brooklyn, New York. The restaurant's extensive menu consists of more than 200 items based on authentic Southern Italian recipes passed down in the Sbarro family.

Enjoy a Christmas party package at Sbarro for only P1,120 and get two stuffed bears for free. You can add another P300 and you take home a book planner. For its Mugnifico Combo promo, buy one slice of cake and a hot Lipton tea for only P250 and get a Sbarro collectible mug for free. You can also buy this Sbarro collectible mug for only P200. Promo is until Dec. 31, 2007.

Sbarro is located at the Upper Ground Level Building A or call 633-1882.



Kenny's holiday rib plate

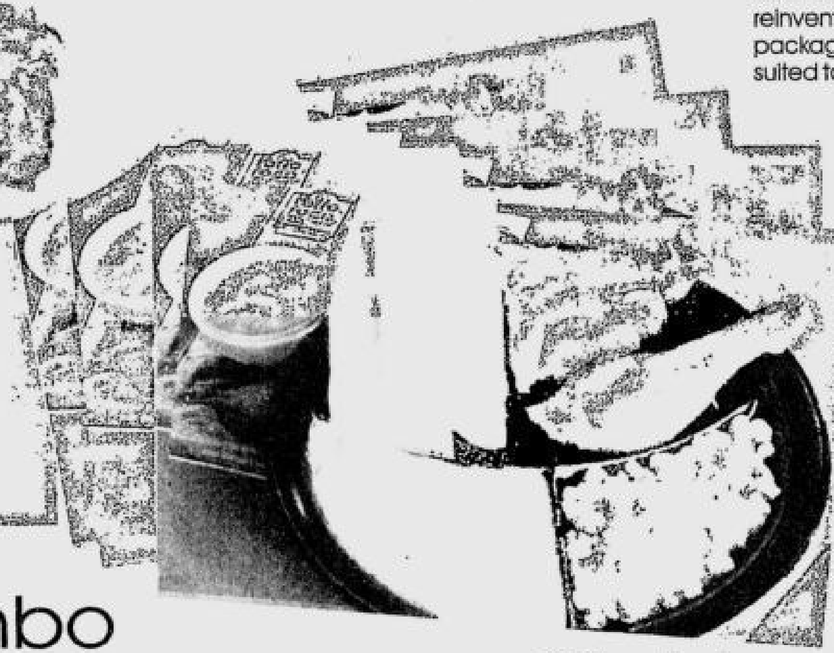
KENNY ROGERS is known for its bountiful servings of roast chicken [illegible] mashed potato, corn and carrots [illegible] ad, cheesy garlic pasta [illegible] and cheese and [illegible] crunchy muffins.

This Christmas, Kenny Rogers offers the perfect holiday treats with the Kenny's Holiday Rib Plate. For P299, you can have a [illegible] slab of honey [illegible] mashed potato, corn on the cob [illegible] de soup. If you add P39, you can have the [illegible] for food gifts to [illegible] family, you can have a box of 12 of Kenny's [illegible] Muffins, a Christmas treat of the many flavored (sugar glazed, choco, and caramel banana chip) muffins.

To cater to the [illegible] crowd, Kenny Rogers offers gourmet [illegible] grilled entrées [illegible]

SM Megamall, upper ground, building A. Tel. No. 6387082-86.

El Pollo Loco: Go chicken-crazy



CHICKEN PREPARED the El Pollo Loco way is definitely a crispier and tastier fare. The restaurant where chicken got reinvented now offers Christmas party packages, up to a dining group of six, suited to any budget.

Packages for a group of six include a mix of El Pollo chicken, large Spanish rice, tortilla, salsa catsup, chicken soft taco, spaghetti, toasted bread, potato salad, coleslaw, corn, Zesto juice, and Twiggies dessert. Party packages range from P75, P95, P99, P100, P125, and P150. Family fiesta meal is P587 only.

SM Megamall, upper ground, building A. Tel. No. 6334977 and 6331617.

Cabalen: a taste of Pampanga

CABALEN [illegible] strongly influenced by the culinary [illegible] Pampanga. Here, the buffet is the best way to go with its thorough sampling of more than 60 dishes. Try also its Merienda All-You-Can for only P106.40.

Also, Cabalen now offers trans-fat free food with the help of private-testing firm Qualibet. Best place to dine during Christmas with your family, loved ones and friends. Visit Cabalen at the 4th Level Building B or call 633-1761.

'Combo Diskwento' at Barrio Fiesta

GENERATIONS of food lovers already know by heart the food joys Barrio Fiesta has constantly kept bringing through the years. The restaurant established in 1958 continues this culinary tradition with gastronomic food offerings meant to satisfy every hungry tummy.

This season of joy, Barrio Fiesta warms up the gatherings with hefty party packages. Its "combo diskwento" packages provide two popular Filipino dishes, kare-kare and crispy pata, for only P499. If you want a seafood-style food package, get the sinalab and pinakbet for only P650.

For mall goers with big snack cravings, Barrio Fiesta has "Snack to Sawa" treat, which costs only P90 for all-you-can-eat merienda: dinuguan, puto, kutsinta, and pancit palabok.

SM Megamall, fourth floor, building A. Tel No. 6355944.

P499.00 only

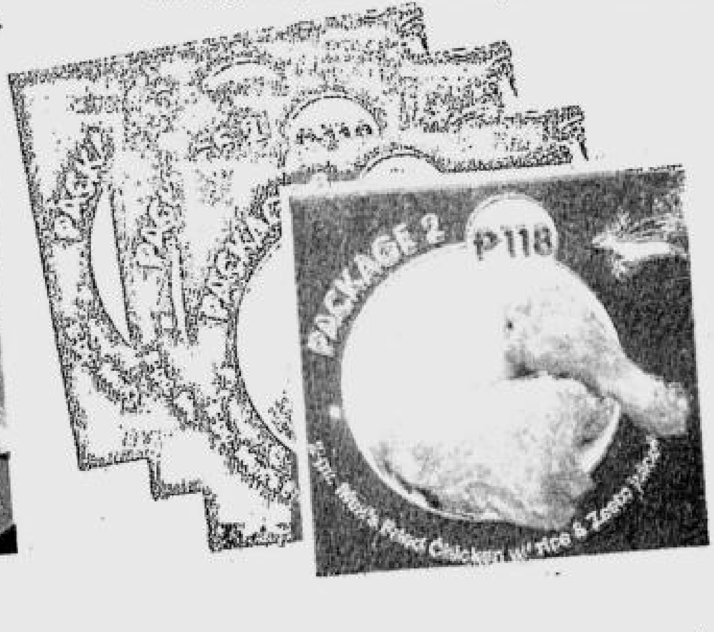
Christmas to the Max's

MAX'S, the restaurant that promotes family values and tradition, makes gatherings more special with a number of Christmas party packages.

Mix and match and take your pick from Max's well known lineup of dishes: Max's famous fried chicken combined with classic Filipino favorites done the Max's way-kare-kare, crispy pata, crispy pata bites, lechon kawali camaron rebusado, sinigang na hipon, sinigang na tiyan ng bangus, chopseuy, pancit canton, and pancit bihon.

For desserts, Max's offers sweet sensations: halo-halo, leche plan, ube crème decadence, buko panda, and ice cream. Party meal packages range from P80 above.

SM Megamall, third level, building A. Tel No. 6331367.



All time family favorites

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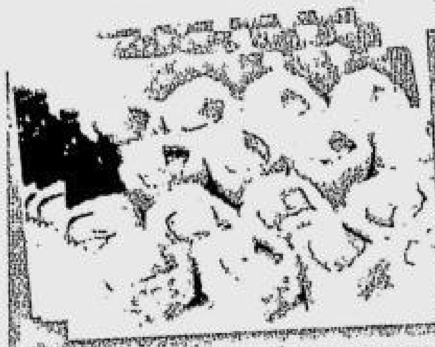

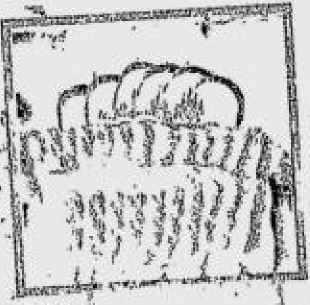

Dads and Kamayan: Take-out Noche Buena feas'

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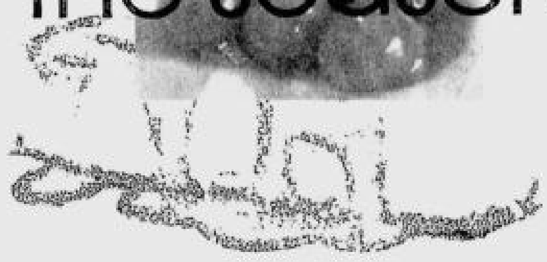

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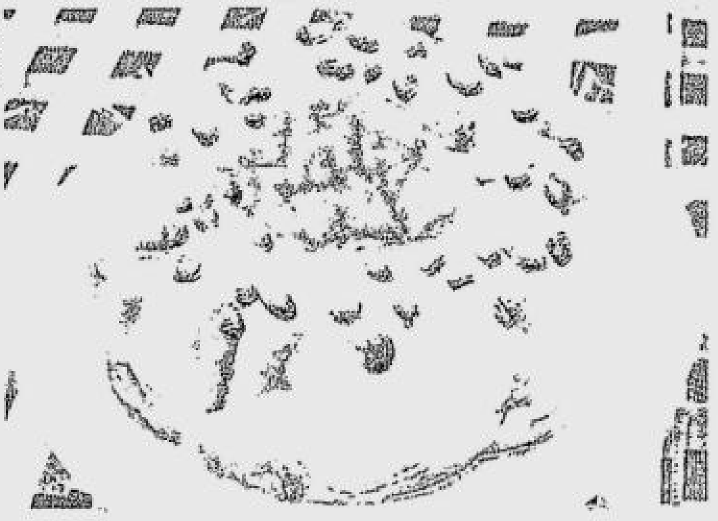

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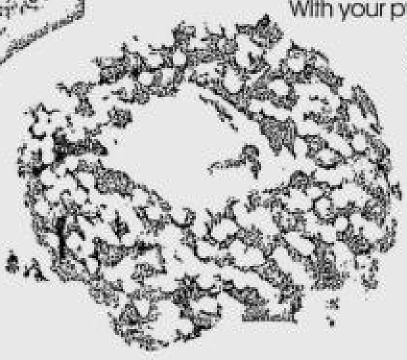

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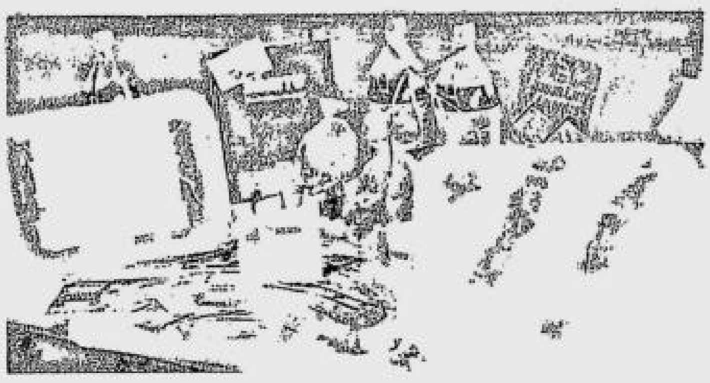

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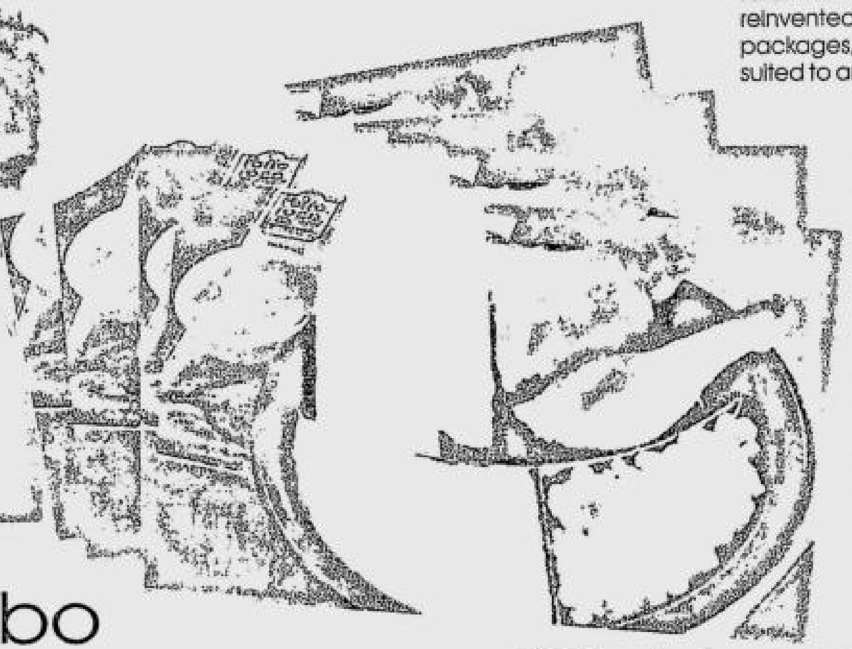

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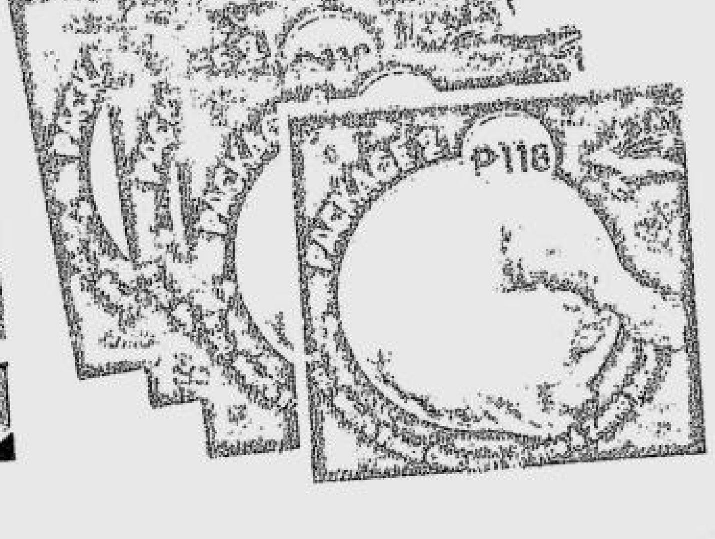
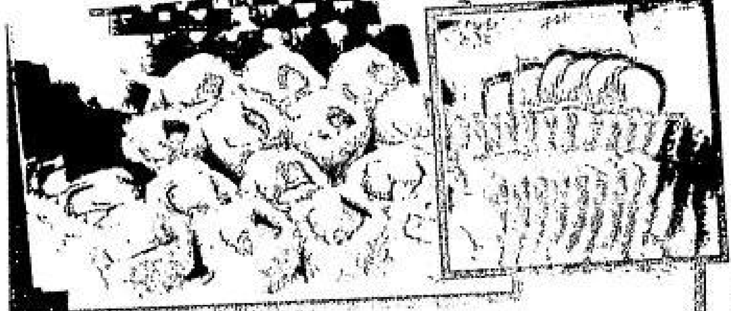


RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

All time family favorites

- their specials or packages for the season



Dads and Kamayan: Take-out Noche Buena feast

THE PLACE that popularized buffet dining and brought the Filipino's food [illegible] to the next level, Dads has thought of how to make holiday gatherings [illegible] and special [illegible] Noche Buena gatherings.

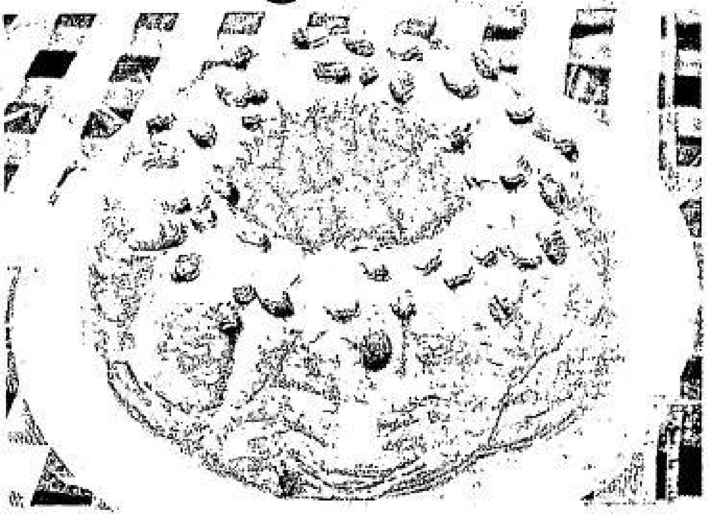
Dads take-out Noche Buena feasts: roast beef [illegible] Angus beef, P3,248/kilo [illegible] Australian roast beef P1,680/kilo; Dads ham P784/kilo [illegible] Roast turkey P840/kilo [illegible] Lengua P1,064; Dads Callos P1,093; Dads Paella P952.

[illegible] traditional Filipino dishes, Kamayan [illegible] Noche Buena fare: lechon de leche P756/kilo [illegible] P520 [illegible] P248/kilo [illegible] Kare-kare P728 [illegible] P504 [illegible] Pork Barbecue 20 pieces P728 [illegible] Bibingka per piece P7.

Kamayan [illegible] only P825 with free [illegible] survey [illegible] Dads [illegible] from Monday to Friday [illegible] for only P465 or P580.

SM Megamall, [illegible] building A. Tel. No. 6363785 or 6331768.

Italianni's merry tea rings



SPREAD rings of good cheer and make it truly a merry Christmas for the children of Bantay Bata. With your purchase of Merry Tea Rings, Italianni's will donate P10 to ABS-CBN's Foundation's Bantay Bata 163.

Merry Tea Rings cost only P395 each. Choose from mocha almond, cinnamon raisin, chocolate chip or classic. For bulk orders of five boxes or more, please order one day in advance. Call 637-3718 or visit Italianni's at the Upper Ground Level, Building A.

Sbarro: Italian fare

SBARRO is the world's leading quick service Italian restaurant which offers a broad menu that includes pizza, pastas, salads, desserts and other Italian foods. Its deep Italian roots date back three generations to Naples, Italy and later Brooklyn, New York. The restaurant's extensive menu consists of more than 200 items based on authentic Southern Italian recipes passed down in the Sbarro family.

Enjoy a Christmas party package at Sbarro for only P1,120 and get two stuffed bears for free. You can add another P300 and you take home a book planner. For its Mugnifico Combo promo, buy one slice of cake and a hot Lipton tea for only P250 and get a Sbarro collectible mug for free. You can also buy this Sbarro collectible mug for only P200. Promo is until Dec. 31, 2007.

Sbarro is located at the Upper Ground Level Building A or call 633-1882.

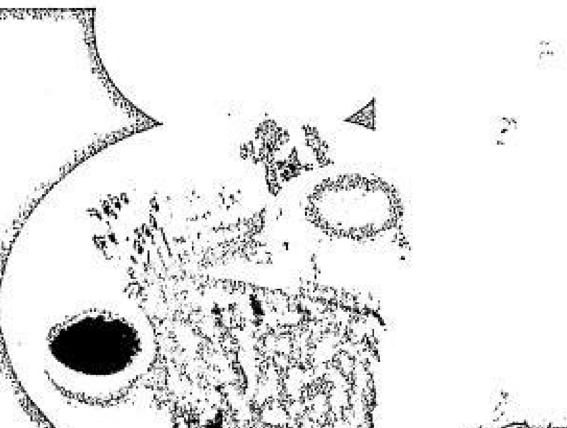
Kenny's holiday rib plate

KENNY ROGERS [illegible]

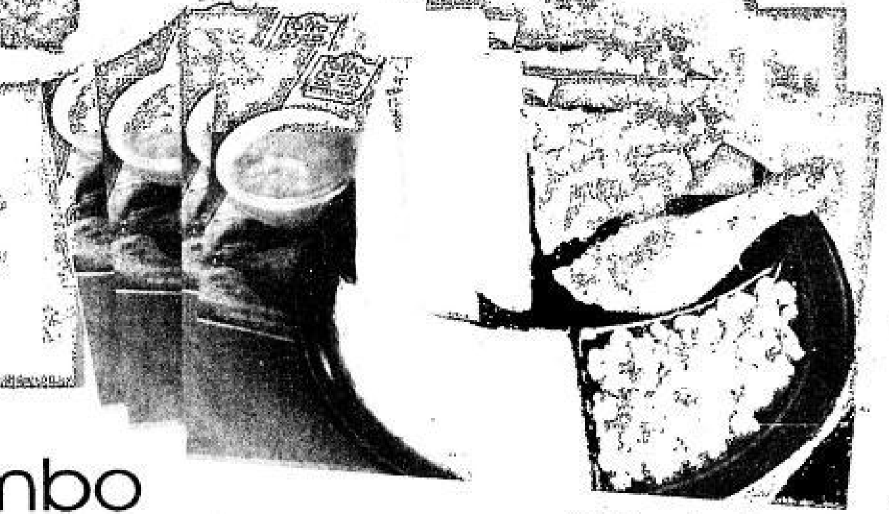
This Christmas, Kenny Rogers offers [illegible] holiday treats with the Kenny's Holiday Rib Plate [illegible] P299 [illegible]

[illegible]

SM Megamall, [illegible]



El Pollo Loco: Go chicken-crazy



CHICKEN PREPARED the El Pollo Loco way is definitely a crispier and tastier fare. The restaurant where chicken got reinvented now offers Christmas party packages, up to a dining group of six, suited to any budget.

Packages for a group of six include a mix of El Pollo chicken, large Spanish rice, tortilla, salsa catsup, chicken soft taco, spaghetti, toasted bread, potato salad, coleslaw, corn, Zesto juice, and Twiggies dessert. Party packages range from P75, P95, P99, P100, P125, and P150. Family fiesta meal is P587 only.

SM Megamall, upper ground, building A. Tel. No. 6334977 and 6331617.

Cabalen: a taste of Pampanga

CABALEN serves traditional Filipino entrees strongly influenced by the cuisine of Pampanga of central Luzon. Here, the buffet is the best way to go with its thorough sampling of more than 50 dishes. Try also its Merienda All-You-Can for only P106.40.

Also, Cabalen now offers trans-fat free food with the help of private-testing firm Qualibet. Best place to dine during Christmas with your family, loved ones and friends. Visit Cabalen at the 4th Level Building B or call 633-1761.

'Combo Diskwento' at Barrio Fiesta

GENERATIONS of food lovers already know by heart the food joys Barrio Fiesta has constantly kept bringing through the years. The restaurant established in 1958 continues this culinary tradition with gastronomic food offerings meant to satisfy every hungry tummy.

This season of joy, Barrio Fiesta warms up the gatherings with hefty party packages. Its "combo diskwento" packages provide two popular Filipino dishes, kare-kare and crispy pata, for only P499. If you want a seafood-style food package, get the sinalab and pinakbet for only P650.

For mall goers with big snack cravings, Barrio Fiesta has "Snack to Sawa" treat, which costs only P90 for all-you-can-eat merienda: dinuguan, puto, kutsinta, and pancit palabok.

SM Megamall, fourth floor, building A. Tel No. 6355944.

P499.00 only!

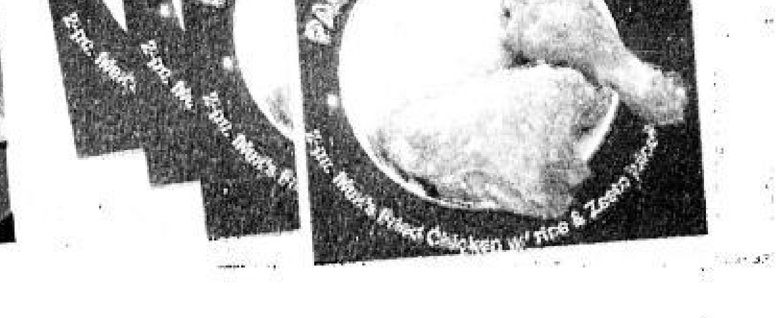
Christmas to the Max's

MAX'S, the restaurant that promotes family values and tradition, makes gatherings more special with a number of Christmas party packages.

Mix and match and take your pick from Max's well known lineup of dishes: Max's famous fried chicken combined with classic Filipino favorites done the Max's way-kare-kare, crispy pata, crispy pata bites, lechon kawali camaron rebusado, sinigang na hipon, sinigang na tiyan ng bangus, chopseuy, pancit canton, and pancit bihon.

For desserts, Max's offers sweet sensations: halo-halo, leche plan, ube crème decadence, buko panda, and ice cream. Party meal packages range from P80 above.

SM Megamall, third level, building A. Tel No. 6331367.



RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Saisaki: Noche Buena with a Japanese twist

THOSE WANTING to add a Japanese twist to their Noche Buena feast or Christmas party fare can always try Saisaki's authentic Japanese food party packages. The restaurant that offers buffet Japanese meals is offering a "Noche Buena Take Out." Take your pick and order now: Salmon sashimi (P952), tuna sashimi (P796), kani sushi (P560), California maki (P336), Gyosa (P448), Tonkatsu (P392), Ebi Tempura (P1,048), Kani Bacon (P616), Yakitori (P448), Saisaki Steak (P952), Chicken Teppan (P448), Salmon Teppan (P896), Yaki Soba (P336), and Yasai Itame (P280). SM Megamall' SM Megamall, 4th floor, bridgeway. Tel. No. 6363785 or 6331768.

Take Out
Noche Buena

Komoro Soba

GOING Japanese this Christmas? Try Komoro Soba. Choose from its donburi or rice toppings in tentoji don, katsu don, sukiyaki don or gyudon, its soba or udon (ebi soda, kara age soba, kaki age soba or yaki udon), or bentos (ebi tempura bento, mix tempura bento, katsu bento or kara age bento).

For Christmas, enjoy the following holiday season offer:

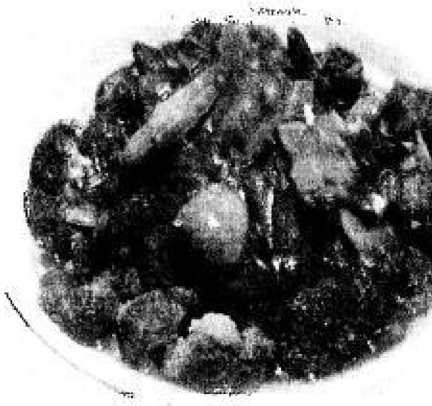
Kara Bento - P108
Katsu Bento - P108

Located at Upper Ground Level Building A. Call 633-8160.

Go Thai with Jatujak

IT'S THE CLOSEST you can get to Thailand! This new kid on the block on the Mega food trip just opened this month and serves authentic Thai food. Enjoy its spicy red curry beef with coconut milk laced with coconut cream and topped with basil leaves. Vegetarians and the health-conscious can relish poh pia fresh, a spring roll which would surely perk up one's taste buds.

Others in the menu are chicken pandan or chicken wrapped in pandan leaves served with sweet sauce which is an excellent alternative to the usual crispy fried chicken or the goong pad nam which is sautéed prawns with fried basil and roasted chili sauce. Try also its special Thai iced tea with milk. Located at the Upper Ground Level, Building A.



'Dine at Mann Hann

FILIPINOS JUST LOVE Chinese food. That's the lure of Mann Hann, at SM Megmall, lower ground floor, building A. For appetizers, have your fill of dimsum, tofu and other Chinese delicacies: soy tofu (P90), chilled tofu with century egg (P90), siomai (P75), shark's fin dumplings (P85), chicken feet (P70), taosi spareribs (P75), machang (P65), shrimp roll (P90), vegetable spring roll (P80), radish cake (P70), dumplings (P90), siopao (P40), and taipao (P90).

Noodles and soup (prices range from P120 to P185): chami, sate chami, seafood chami, sate cha bihon, seafood cha bihon, pork leg bihon, miki bihon, beef hofan, seafood hofan, pancit canton, hot and sour soup, batchoy seaweed soup, beef soup, wonton soup, roast chicken noodles, roast chicken asado noodles, wonton noodles, beef brisket noodles, asado noodles, chicken noodles, oyster misua, duck misua, lomi, and maki mi.

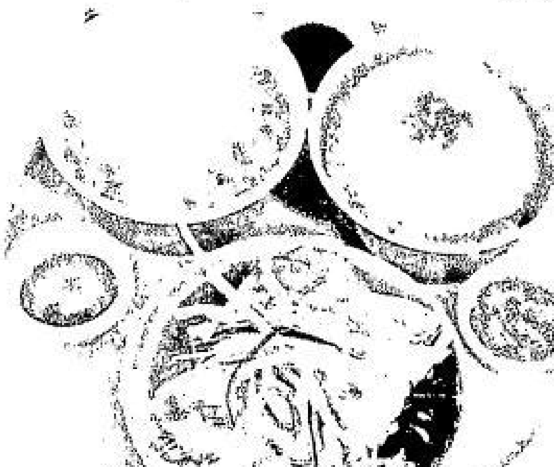
Rice toppings, prices range from P175 to P185: beef broccoli flower rice, beef ampalaya rice, spicy beef rice, taosi spareribs rice, sweet and sour pork rice, lechon macau rice, hongma rice, fish tofu rice, fish broccoli flower rice, seafood rice and sweet and sour fish fillet rice.

Man Hann also offers a number of vegetable dishes and meat and poultry preparations good enough for gatherings.

Celebrating Asian Flavors

- their specials and packages for the holidays

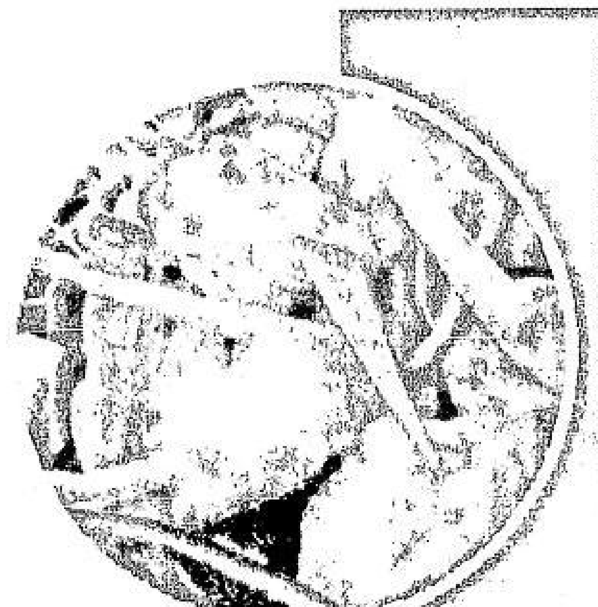
Cavana: Singapore's best chicken rice'



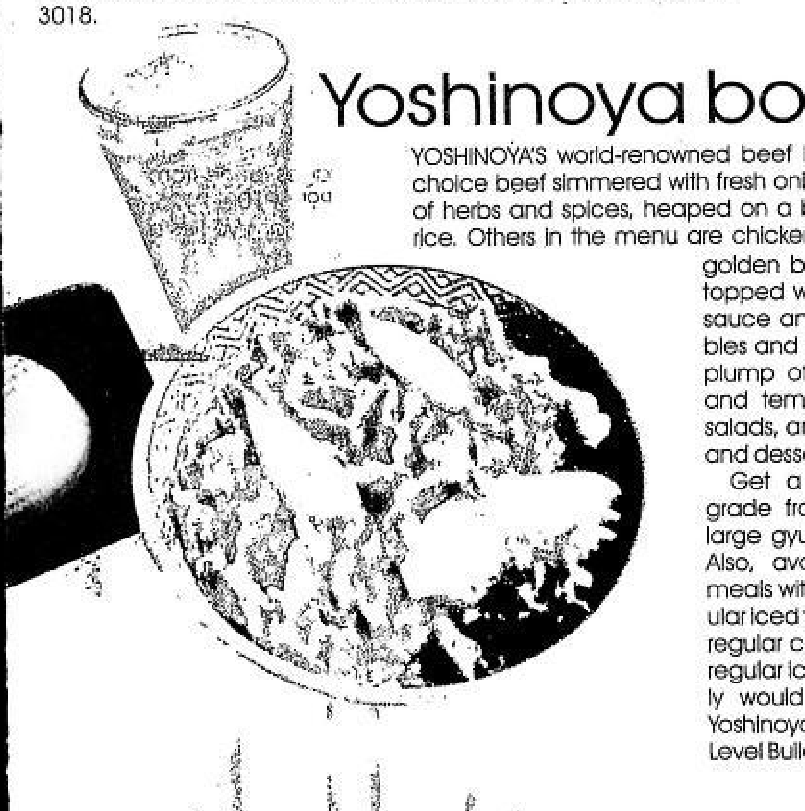
HAVE a taste of Singapore's best chicken rice only at Cavana!

For this Christmas, avail any of Cavana's holiday offerings. Its classic chicks are now only P99. Choose from Cavana classic cutlet, honey grilled chicken cutlet, black pepper chicken cutlet or red roast chicken cutlet. It even comes with a free iced tea and served with Hainanese rice and coleslaw. Try also its hot chicks, in chicken or beer teriyaki, and get 50-percent off on your iced tea or soda.

Cavana's specialties are the Cavana curry rice and the Hainanese chicken boneless leg which you can enjoy for only P129! Visit its outlet at the Upper Ground Level Building A or call 638-3018.



Yoshinoya bowls



YOSHINOYA'S world-renowned beef bowls are made from choice beef simmered with fresh onions in a special sauce of herbs and spices, heaped on a bed of steaming, fluffy rice. Others in the menu are chicken teriyaki bowls-tender, golden brown slices of chicken topped with its exclusive teriyaki sauce and a variety of vegetables and smothered over a bed plump of steaming white rice-and tempura, noodles, bento, salads, and a host of side dishes and desserts.

Get a Yoshinoya Super Upgrade from regular gyudon to large gyudon on your next visit. Also, avail of regular gyudon meals with almond jelly and regular iced tea for only P122 while a regular chicken teriyaki also with regular iced tea and almond jelly would cost you only P142. Yoshinoya is at the Upper Ground Level Building A. Call 632-1352.

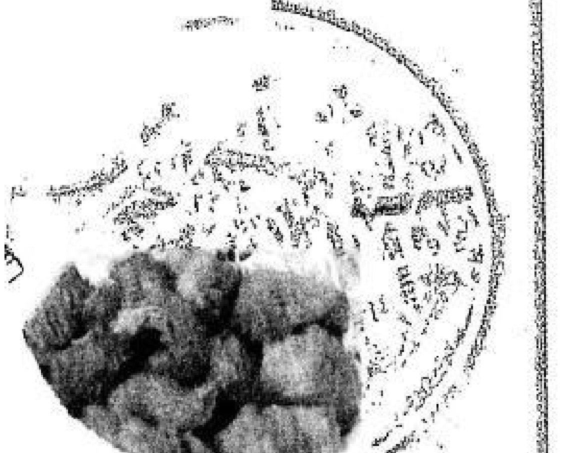
See ya at Sushi-ya

SUSHI, sushi, and more sushi on the feast table. Wouldn't that be good enough as a Christmas wish? Check out Sushi-Ya, the hang-out place at SM Megmall, lower ground floor building B.

People go to Sushiya because its sushis affordable and graciously served. Think big sushis-that's enough to make your mouth water.

Sushi-ya feast begins with set meals of scrumptious overload of sushis and other famous Japanese food. From P50, P100, and P250 only.

So see ya at Sushi-ya. Tel. No. 6319998.



Kaya Express, truly Korean dining

A COZY place for enjoying authentic Korean dishes, Kaya Express offers good service and reasonable prices, making this restaurant ideal for lunch or business meetings. Dining experience is truly Korean, from soups, noodles, spring rolls, meat and seafood dishes, to various types of kimchi. Ambiance too is authentic Korean, with lots of natural light and modern furniture with Korean accents and decor. Ask for your order to be cooked moderately spicy or very spicy, then complement the taste with various condiments. Fruit juices, soft drinks and beer go with your meal.

SM Megamall, upper ground floor, building A. Tel. No. 6364635.

Mey Lin Pot and Noodle House

FAMOUS for its hand-pulled noodles, this is what this Chinese restaurant is all about. Its seafood noodles come in clean, clear broth with a crab stick, fish fillet, squid, fish tofu and seaweeds.

Best for family gatherings this Christmas season.

Mixed seafood noodles, meal size - P150
Mixed seafood noodles, snack size - P100
Steamed dumplings (pork and kuthsay leaves) - P130
Visit its outlet at the 4th Level, Building A or call 634-1261.

Salsak [illegible]

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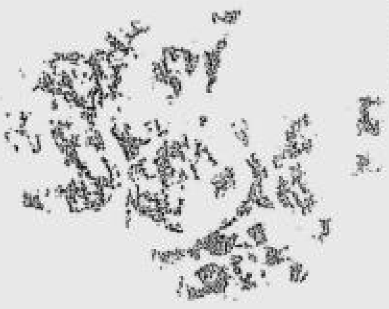

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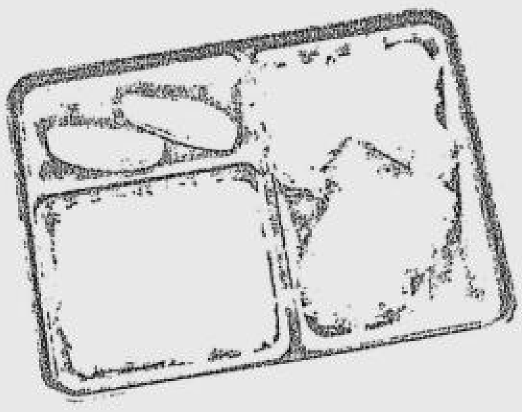

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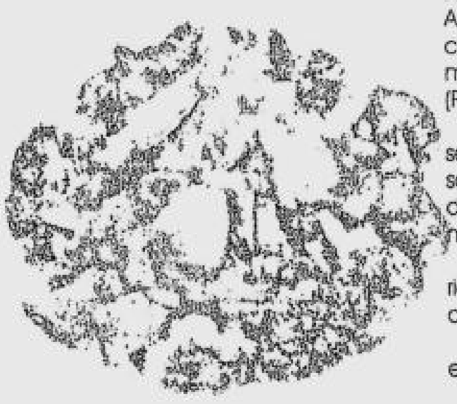

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- their specials and packages for the holidays

Cavana: Singapore's best chicken rice'

[illegible] gar [illegible] tmc [illegible] ure [illegible] ney grill [illegible] chicke [illegible] lle [illegible] Hainane [illegible] slow [illegible] also [illegible] eer teriya and get [illegible] off [illegible] Cavana's specialti [illegible] Hainanese chicken [illegible] g [illegible] P1.28 [illegible] outlet at [illegible] Cavana's holiday offerings [illegible] se fro Cavana [illegible] assi [illegible] pepper chicken cutlet [illegible] a free iced tea and s [illegible] chicken [illegible] chicken [illegible] iced tea or soda. [illegible] curry rice and the [illegible] can enj [illegible] to only [illegible] Building A. Call 638 [illegible]

Yoshinoya bowls

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Get a [illegible] Yoshinoya [illegible] Upgrade fr[illegible] regular gyud[illegible] to large gy[illegible] when you [illegible] visit [illegible] so, ava[illegible] regular gyudon [illegible] meals wit[illegible] and jelly and regular iced [illegible] only P[illegible] while a regular [illegible] teriyaki [illegible] with regular [illegible] and an [illegible] iced jelly would [illegible] you o[illegible] 142 [illegible] Yoshinoya at the Upper Ground Level Building [illegible] Call 63[illegible] 352.

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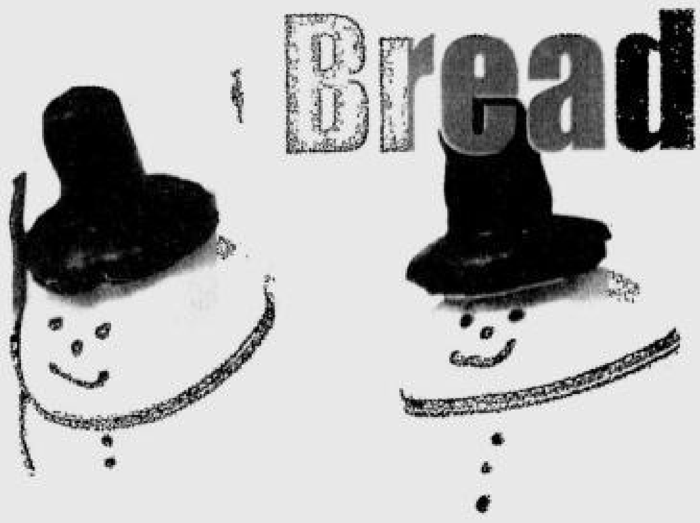
Mey Lin Pot and Noodle House

[illegible]

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Bread basket - special breads and treats for the holidays



Perfect fruitcake from French Baker

IDEAL GIFTS THIs Christmas include nutty textured fruitcakes. Where to seek the perfect piece and bite? French Baker's. Its classic fruit cake is sought after. It's made of the finest ingredients and properly aged and soaked in French brandy to bring out that old-fashioned taste and goodness in every slice. Only P345. Tel. No. 920-3144

Bread Talk: bread culture

BREAD Talk's freshly baked creations have always brought smiles to faces around the world.

A Singaporean bread store, it is famous for its baked on-site "see-through" menu kitchen concept, innovative recipes coupled with mind-boggling, quirky bread names. Customers welcome a brand new bread culture with its refreshing concept.

Enjoy Bread Talk's Christmas offerings. Frosty, or dark chocolate inside coated with white chocolate, only at P55. Or its flosss:

Regular (classic pork) - P46
Cheese flosss (with cheese) - P55
Hot Chick (spicy chicken) - P46
Fire flosss (Spicy Pork) - P46

Visit Bread Talk at the Lower Ground Level, Building A. Call 638-6880 or 631-5877.

Jipan baked cakes

FRESHLY baked cakes and [illegible] quality natural ingredients. Jipan does not use preservatives or taste enhancers, [illegible] in any of its cakes or pastries.

This holiday season, try Jipan's Christmas cakes [illegible] with special decorations such as Christmas chocolate and Santa Claus. Try St. Honore Cake (special cake with custard cream puff and strawberry) for only P1,200 [illegible] Chocolate Cookie House for only P980. You can choose also from its wide array of bread baskets. Perfect gift for your friends and loved ones. Visit Jipan at the Lower Ground Level, Building A or call 633-5990.

Le Coeur De France holiday loafs

LOAFS and muffins help make holiday festivities complete as they are usually the ones everybody looks forward to this Yuletide season. They can also be a welcome present to your friends and loved ones.

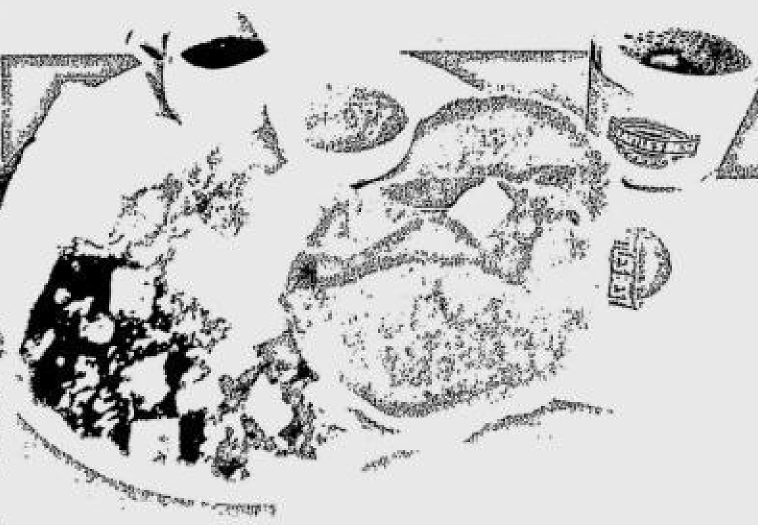
Try Le Coeur De France holiday loafs and muffins at affordable prices:

Corn loaf, beetroot loaf, pumpkin loaf - P102.00 each.

Christmas muffins (banana, chocolate, orange) - P35.00 each.

Visit Le Coeur De France at the Upper Ground Level, Building A. Call 637-968[illegible].

Coffee tea time - coffee and tea specials for the holidays



Hearty breakfast and light meals at Seattle's Best Coffee

SM Megamall's Megastrip lane is bustling with diners enjoying coffee break at Seattle's Best Coffee.

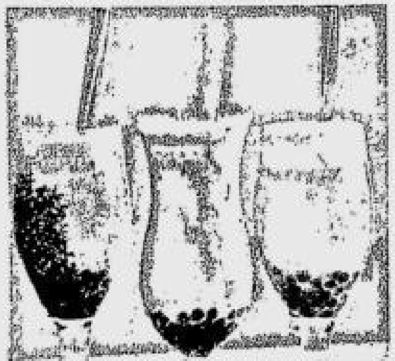
It's a destination not only of coffee lovers who love to chat and drink coffee after work, but also of morning people having their breakfast or brunch before hitting the office.

Seattle's breakfast pancakes (P118 to P138)) include plain pancakes served with sausages or bacon. Its French toasts and omelettes (P118 to P159) include a choice of ham and cheese and sausage and mushroom. Regular breakfast fare (P125 to P180): a choice of egg, bacon strips, wheat bread, fruit marmalade, sautéed corned beef, and pancakes.

Light meals (P135 to P180): pasta Amatriciana, linguini pasta tossed with a tomato-based sauce and sautéed bacon slices topped with parmesan cheese; pesto, sprinkled with parmesan cheese, chopped walnut and fresh parsley, and served with wheat bread; Arrabiatta, penne Rigate pasta tossed with a slightly spicy tomato-based sauce, topped with sliced anchovies and parmesan cheese. And of course the sandwiches and salads (P130 to P140): ham, clubhouse, tuna salad, all-vegetable salad, chef's salad.

As a coffeehouse that serves gourmet coffee, Seattle offers diners ideal gifts for this season: packages of Seattle's Best Coffee blend, beans and sugar crystals duo (P650), Christmas goody box (P625), gift certificates and coffee tumblers. Tel. 6871021.

Burst a bubble at Bubble Tea



BUBBLE Tea is a restaurant that specializes in tapioca tea drinks and aims to change the way we view the now overlooked pearl beverage.

Bubble Tea offers ingeniously created beverages that contain soft and chewy pearls, or "bubbles." The restaurant with anime appeal now offers tapioca drinks in many variants: Taro Milk Tea, Almond Milk Tea, Coconut Milk Tea, Mocha Milkshake, Strawberry Milkshake, and Double Chocolate Milkshake. Bestselling drink is the Royal Milk Tea, a combination of black tea, milk and sugar. The Black Sesame Milkshake, Taro Milkshake and Azuki Red Bean Milkshake are all smooth and creamy, thanks to their generous servings of ice cream.

The soft and warm tapioca balls nicely complement the thick, cold cream of the milkshake. And all the drinks are only mildly sweet, just enough to make you thirst for more.

SM Megamall, lower ground floor, building A. Tel. No. 6387479.

Gloria Jeans ultimate coffee experience

COMMITTED to delivering the ultimate coffee experience, Gloria Jean's Coffees provides customers with a large range of [illegible] coffees including estate, origins and delicious flavored coffees, and a complete menu of espresso-based beverages such as lattes, cappuccinos, smoothies, [illegible], cocoas and gourmet teas. It also offers a selection of coffee brewing equipment, grinders, quality merchandise and gift packs.

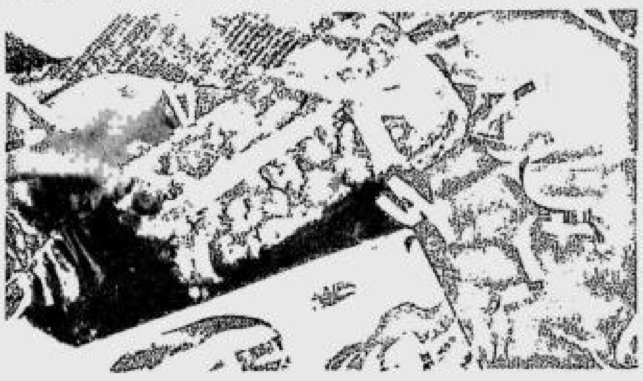
This season, love coffee as Gloria Jean's Coffees go with its Christmas promo.

Buy four large drinks and avail of the coffee bear (a stuffed toy with coffee inside [illegible]) [illegible] designs. Buy 12 large drinks and avail of Gloria Jean's [illegible] ABBA boxing CD.

Located at the 2nd Level, Building A. Call 63[illegible]-1560.

GLORIOUS CHRISTMAS
ABBA
ABBA
ABBA

Bread basket - special breads and treats for the holidays



Perfect fruitcake from French Baker

[illegible]

Bread Talk: bread culture

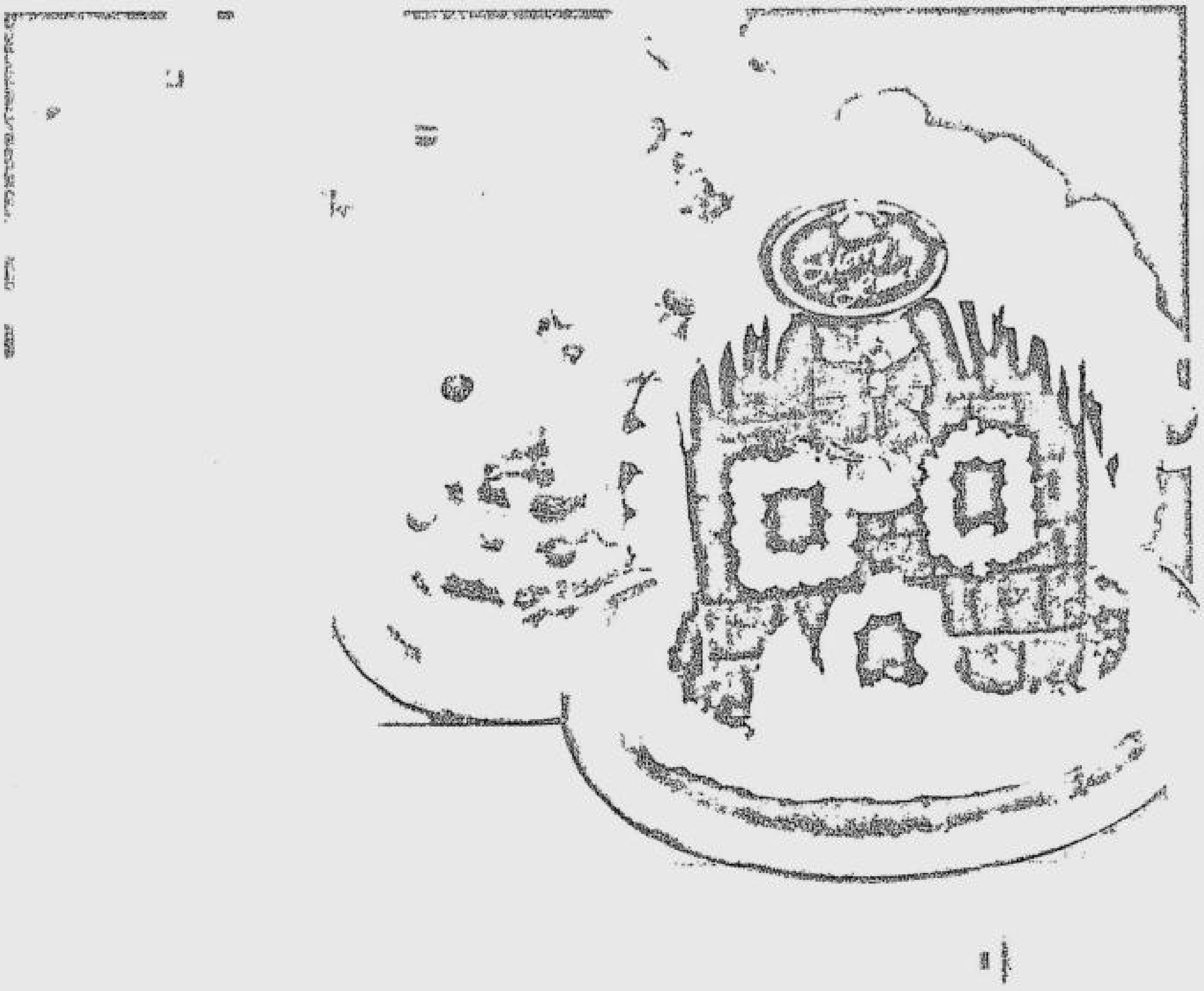
BREAD Talk's freshly baked creations have always brought smiles to faces around the world.

A Singaporean bread store, it is famous for its baked on-site "see-through" menu kitchen concept, innovative recipes coupled with mind-boggling, quirky bread names. Customers welcome a brand new bread culture with its refreshing concept.

Enjoy Bread Talk's Christmas offerings. Frosty, or dark chocolate inside coated with white chocolate, only at P55. Or its flosss:

Regular (classic pork) - P46
Cheese flosss (with cheese) - P55
Hot Chick (spicy chicken) - P46
Fire flosss (Spicy Pork) - P46

Visit Bread Talk at the Lower Ground Level, Building A. Call 638-6880 or 631-5877.



- coffee and tea specials for the holidays

SM Megamall's Megastrip lane is bustling with diners enjoying coffee break at Seattle's Best Coffee.

It's a destination not only of coffee lovers who love to chat and drink coffee after work, but also of morning people having their breakfast or brunch before hitting the office.

Seattle's breakfast pancakes (P118 to P138)) include plain pancakes served with sausages or bacon. Its French toasts and omelettes (P118 to P159) include a choice of ham and cheese and sausage and mushroom. Regular breakfast fare (P125 to P180): a choice of egg, bacon strips, wheat bread, fruit marmalade, sautéed corned beef, and pancakes.

Light meals (P135 to P180): pasta Amatriciana, linguini pasta tossed with a tomato-based sauce and sautéed bacon slices topped with parmesan cheese, pesto, sprinkled with parmesan cheese, chopped walnut and fresh parsley, and served with wheat bread; Arrabiatta, penne Rigate pasta tossed with a slightly spicy tomato-based sauce, topped with sliced anchovies and parmesan cheese. And of course the sandwiches and salads (P130 to P140): ham, clubhouse, tuna salad, all-vegetable salad, chef's salad.

As a coffeehouse that serves gourmet coffee, Seattle offers diners ideal gifts for this season: packages of Seattle's Best Coffee blend, beans and sugar crystals duo (P650), Christmas goody box (P625), gift certificates and coffee tumblers. Tel. 6871021

Burst a bubble at Bubble Tea

BUBBLE Tea is a restaurant that specializes in tapioca tea drinks and aims to change the way we view the now overlooked pearl beverage.

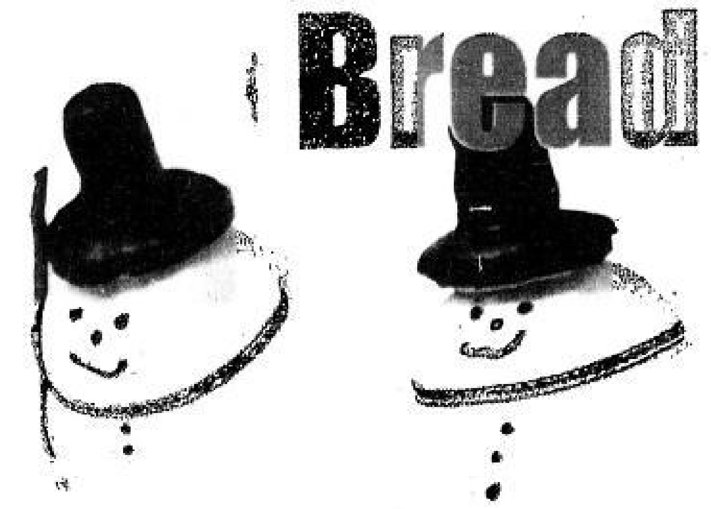
Bubble Tea offers ingeniously created beverages that contain soft and chewy pearls, or "bubbles." The restaurant with anime appeal now offers tapioca drinks in many variants: Taro Milk Tea, Almond Milk Tea, Coconut Milk Tea, Mocha Milkshake, Strawberry Milkshake, and Double Chocolate Milkshake. Bestselling drink is the Royal Milk Tea, a combination of black tea, milk and sugar. The Black Sesame Milkshake, Taro Milkshake and Azuki Red Bean Milkshake are all smooth and creamy, thanks to their generous servings of ice cream.

The soft and warm tapioca balls nicely complement the thick, cold cream of the milkshake. And all the drinks are only mildly sweet, just enough to make you thirst for more.

SM Megamall, lower ground floor, building A. Tel. No. 6387479.

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Bread basket - special breads and treats for the holidays



Perfect fruitcake from French Baker

IDEAL GIFTS THIs Christmas include nutty textured fruitcakes. Where to seek the perfect piece and bite? French Baker's. Its classic fruit cake is sought after. It's made of the finest ingredients and properly aged and soaked in French brandy to bring out that old-fashioned taste and goodness in every slice. Only P345. Tel. No. 920-3144

Bread Talk: bread culture

BREAD Talk's freshly baked creations have always brought smiles to faces around the world.

A Singáporean bread store, it is famous for its baked on-site "see-through" menu kitchen concept, innovative recipes coupled with mind-boggling, quirky bread names. Customers welcome a brand new bread culture with its refreshing concept.

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Hot Chick (spicy chicken) - P46
Fire flosss (Spicy Pork) - P46

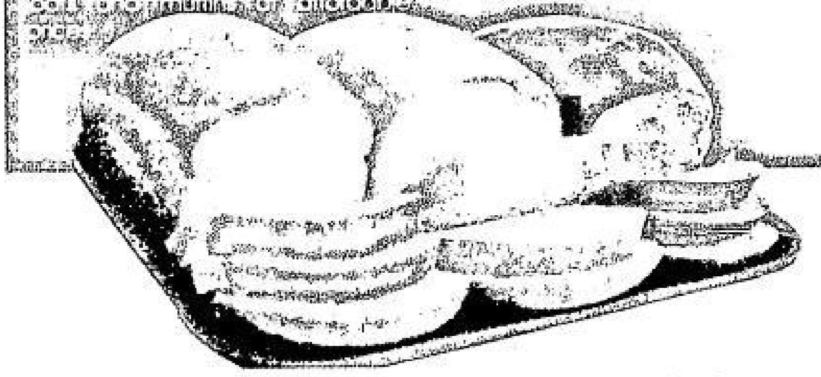
Visit Bread Talk at the Lower Ground Level, Building A. Call 638-6880 or 631-5877.

Jipan baked cakes

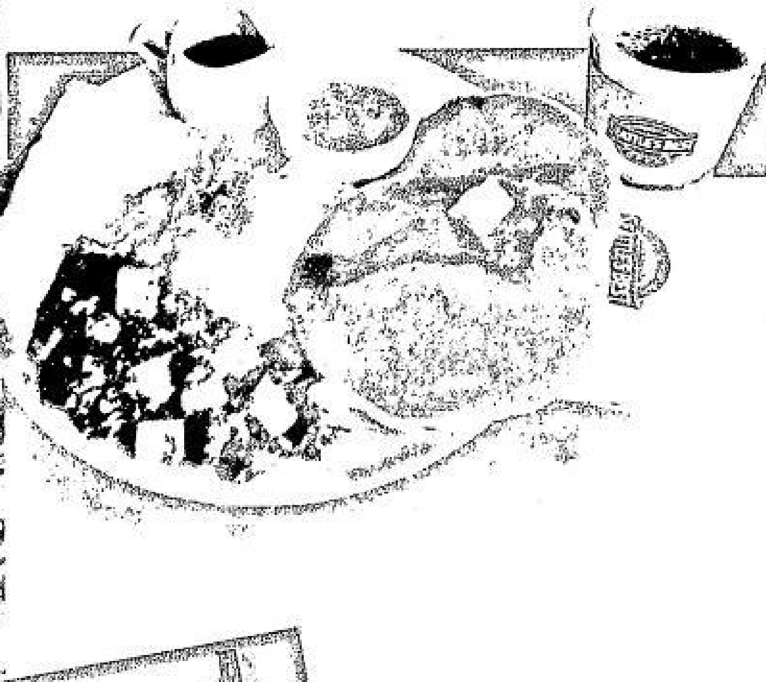
[illegible]

Le Coeur De France holiday loafs

[illegible]



Coffee tea time - coffee and tea specials for the holidays



Hearty breakfast and light meals at Seattle's Best Coffee

SM Megamall's Megastrip lane is bustling with diners enjoying coffee break at Seattle's Best Coffee.

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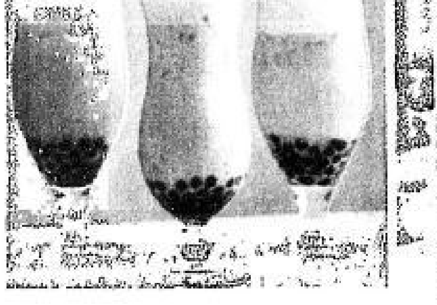

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SM Megamall, lower ground floor, building A. Tel. No. 6387479.

Gloria Jeans: ultimate coffee experience

COMMITTED to delivering the ultimate coffee experience, Gloria Jean's Coffees provides customers with [illegible]

Located at the 2nd level, Building A. Tel. 63[illegible] 1560.

Merry Xmas
ABBA
ABBA
ABBA

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

JOB Market
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2007
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For jobseekers, log on to: www. jobmarketonline.com
JOBMarket is exclusively for job advertisements.
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P245 per column centimeter every Sunday
DEADLINES
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Thursday 12:00 noon
Text us your feedback: Inquirer jm name/city/message. Send to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
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1

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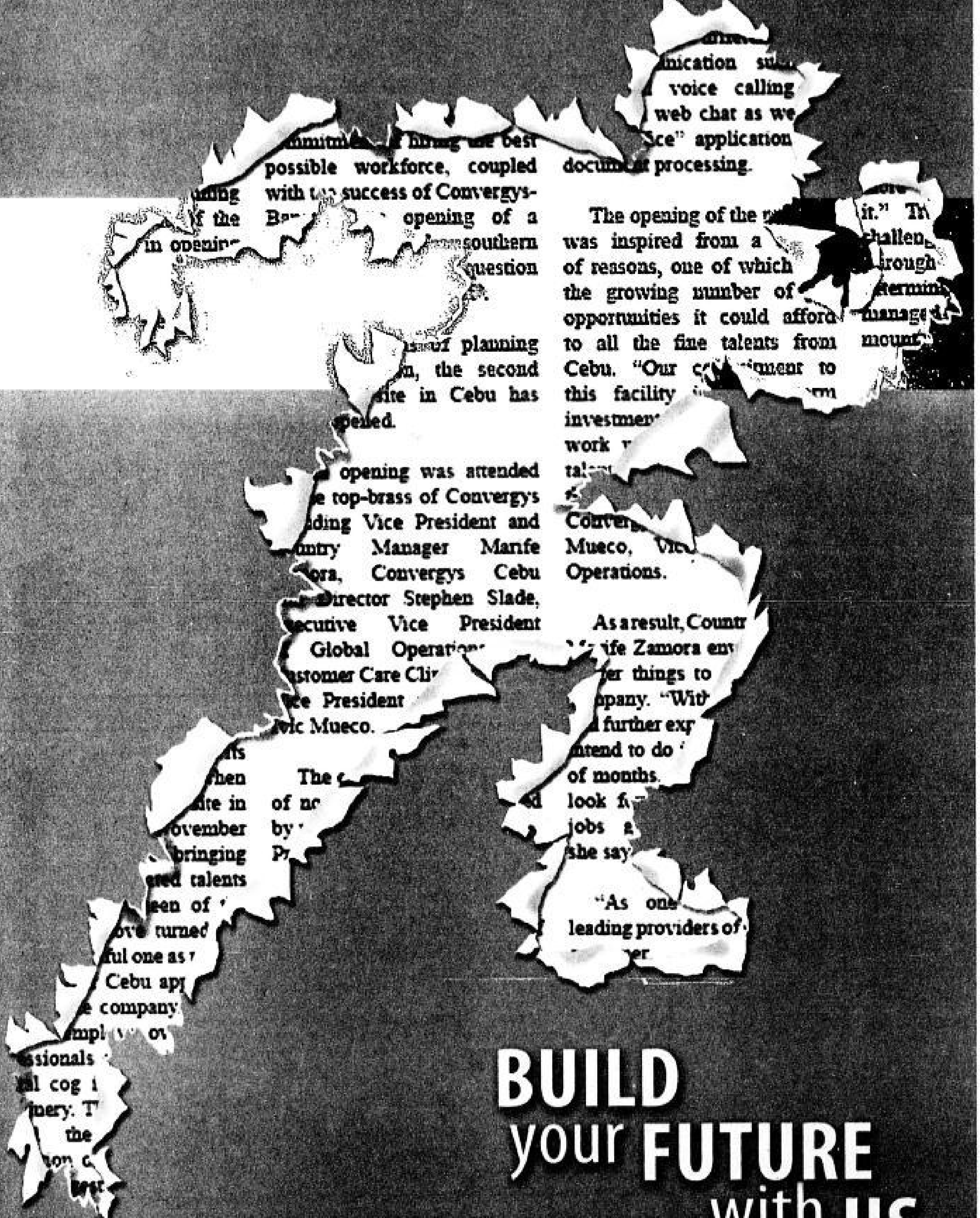

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With Sales Accounts offering up to P30,000 monthly sales incentive

Recruitment Specialist
- at least 6 months recruitment experience required
Customer Service Associates
* Please email resumes to *vincent.noel.d.bugay@convergys.com*

OPENINGS IN CEBU:
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Customer Service Associates (*Technical & Semi-Technical Account*)
Culture & Communications Trainer
Communication Coach
HR Officer
HR Specialist

OPENINGS IN COMMONWEALTH:
Customer Service Associates- *Satellite TV Account*
Customer Service Associates- *Automotive Account*
Customer Service Associates- *Technical Support (Full Time)*
Customer Service Associates- *Technical Support (Part Time)*
Operations Manager - *Technical Account*
Workforce Management Specialist
Recruitment Officer
Recruitment Specialist
HR Officer
* Please email resumes to *rachel.ramirez@convergys.com*

OPENINGS IN MAKATI:
Customer Service Associates
Technical Customer Service Associates - *Inbound*
Technical Customer Service Associate
- *Troubleshooting and Networking*
Sr. Branding Officer
Recruitment Specialist
Benefits Associate (*Project based*)
Purchasing Associate (*Project based*)
Administrative Assistant

OPENINGS IN ORTIGAS:
Outbound Collections Representatives
Customer Service Associate - *Technical*
Customer Service Associate - *Financial And Sales*
*Data Network Manager
*Senior HR Officer
*Sourcing Associate (*Project Based*)
* Please email resumes to *aireen.grace.a.palafox@convergys.com*

OPENINGS IN U-BELT:
Recruitment Associate (*Project Based*)

Our office at the U-Belt is, likewise, accepting applications for all Convergys sites.

CATCH US ON THESE DATES FOR OUR JOB FAIRS / CAMPUS EVENTS
Dec 10-16- 2nd Level Festival Mall, Alabang
Dec. 14-16 Paseo Marina, Ayala Center Cebu (fronting Guess)
Dec. 14-16 Ayala Center Cebu
(Rotunda Area 2 fronting Blue Magic)
Dec. 20-21 Noreko 2 Bldg, Siliman Ave. Dumaguete

Get P20,000 Christmas bonus

if you get hired for our SELECTED Technical Accounts in **Makati** and **Cebu**
- P7,500 to be credited on the 1st paycheck
- P7,500 upon successful completion of product training
- P5,000 on the 90th day of employment

CONVERGYS is committed to the career growth of its agents, team leaders, senior team leaders and operations managers through its highly-structured career path and an intensive Management Development Program.

**Walk-in applicants in casual attire will be entertained until December.*

ALABANG OFFICE
Block 44, Northgate Cyberzone,
Muntinlupa City
(02) 758-1558 / 7581553

CEBU BANAWA OFFICE
R. Arcenas St.,
Arcenas Estate,
Banawa Hills,
Cebu City
(032) 4165810

CEBU ASIATOWN IT PARK OFFICE
11/F i2 Bldg.
Asiatown IT Park,
Lahug, Cebu City.
(032) 4119217 / 4119218

COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
2/F Diliman Commercial Center,
#46 Don Mariano Marcos Ave.
Diliman, Quezon City
(02) 756-7019 / 7567200

MAKATI OFFICE
Convergys One, 6796
Ayala Ave. cor Salcedo St.
Legaspi Village, Makati City
(02) 792-3177 / 792-3138

ORTIGAS OFFICE
24th Floor, Robinsons
Equitable Tower, #4 ADB Ave.
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(02) 756-7274 / 8577652

U-BELT OFFICE
Level 1, St. Thomas Square
1150 España Boulevard cor.
Padre Campa St.
Sampaloc, Manila
(02) 735-2006

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CBI

CBI is one of the world's leading Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) companies specializing in lump-sum turnkey projects for customers that produce, process, store and distribute the world's natural resources.

Candidates are currently being sought for several key positions at various locations, throughout CBI's international operations.

Project Cost Engineers (Qatar, UAE, Angola and Saudi Arabia)

- Establish appropriate cost code structures, track budgeted items from estimation to execution / close-out phase utilizing trend / change management systems
- Prepare cash flows, cost of working capital, multiple currencies and hedging
- Prepare cost forecasts, staffing plans, contingency / gross margin analysis
- Report on project cost / commitment and financial status
- Prepare invoice validation / valuations, variation orders and back charges.

Project Planning Engineers (Qatar, UAE, Kuwait, Angola and Saudi Arabia)

- Manage multiple resource loaded project schedules with up to 5,000 activities
- Develop Level 1 - 4 schedules utilizing WBS / OBS
- Quantity tracking (engineering deliverables and installed commodities)
- Prepare critical path analysis, provide progress updates, validation & reporting
- Delay and schedule impact analysis and inputs into change management systems

Project Controls Managers (Qatar, UAE, Angola and Saudi Arabia)

- All of the above mentioned plus a minimum of 10 years hands-on Project Controls experience, with at least 2 years within a supervisory role
- Provide strong leadership and analytical skills

Company culture and work requirements will suit individuals who are achievement oriented, have good presentation skills, are self-starters, and capable of working effectively both independently and as a team member.

Please state in your application what location/s you are willing to work in. All positions are Single Status. Interviews of qualified and selected applicants will be held in Manila in January 08.

Qualified and interested applicants may apply personally with two (2) sets of bio-data, resume of work experience with detailed employment history and job description, recent photo, employment certifications and other supporting documents at:

PARMAN INCORPORTED
Personnel Department
7F MGF Champaca Building,156 Amorsolo Street
corner Pasay Road, Legaspi Village, Makati City
or email us at recruitment@parmaninc.com

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DeathCare Experts

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

- Candidate must possess at least a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing, Communication Arts or equivalent
- With at least 3 years experience as Business Development Manager/Officer
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Willing to do field work
- Must be result-oriented

REGIONAL MANAGERS

- College graduate
- At least 3 years experience in Sales, Marketing and Operations
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Know how in recruitment & training
- Willing to do field work
- Must be result-oriented
- Willing to accept provincial assignments

MARKETING ASSISTANT

- Candidate must possess at least a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing, Communication Arts or equivalent
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Experience is an advantage but not a requirement
- Computer literate
- Willing to do field work

PROGRAMMER

- Candidate must possess at least Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science/ Information Technology or equivalent
- Required Programming skill(s):
  - Excel Macro and/or Excel Pivot Reporting
  - Visual Basic 6.0, V.B.Net
  - SQL Server, Microsoft Access
  - VB .NET an advantage
- With knowledge in database designing and administration
- With at least 1 year experience in programming

TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF

- Candidate must possess at least Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science/ Information Technology or equivalent
- With knowledge in PC Installation, Troubleshooting, Networking & Video editing
- Proficient in Adobe Photoshop and Pagemaker, Macromedia Dreamweaver & Flash
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Provincial applicants are very much welcome

BRANCH MANAGERS

- College graduate
- At least 1 year experience in Sales & Marketing
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Know how in hiring/staffing
- With good interpersonal skills
- Customer-service oriented
- Provincial applicants are very much welcome

ASSISTANT CHAPEL MANAGERS

- College graduate
- With at least 2 years experience in Memorial Service Industry
- Above average in oral and written communication
- With good interpersonal skills
- Customer-service oriented
- Willing to work on shifting schedules
- Provincial applicants are very much welcome

FAMILY CARE REPRESENTATIVES

- College graduate
- With pleasing personality, hardworking and energetic
- Can work with minimum supervision
- Willing to work on shifting schedule
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Customer-service oriented

CREMATORY OPERATOR

- College level preferably college graduate
- With at least 2 years experience in operating or assisting Cremation equipment
- Willing to be trained in the latest Cremation Technology
- Know-how in all the Cremation processes
- Customer-service oriented

ACCOUNTING & AUDIT STAFF

- Candidate must possess at least a Bachelor's degree in Accountancy or Business Administration
- CPA is an advantage
- Proficient in MS Office Application
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Can work with minimum supervision
- Willing to travel and accept provincial assignments
- Provincial applicants are very much welcome

OFFICE STAFF

- College graduate
- Computer literate
- Above average in oral and written communication
- Can work with minimum supervision
- New graduates are very much welcome

Interested candidates, please send your updated resumé to:
E-mail: **cecilpb@stpeter.com.ph**
Or may personally apply at:
St. Peter Life Plan Building
Quezon Avenue corner No. 2 West 4th St., Quezon City
Telephone No. 371-77-57

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PLAN.

AXA Philippines, the country's fastest-growing life insurer, is in need of

Financial Executives
For Metro Manila & Provincial Areas

Binondo, Manila, Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Ortigas, Pasig, Makati, Valenzuela, Binangonan, Rizal, La Union, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo

A basic salary, superior compensation package and travel opportunities await qualified candidates

QUALIFICATIONS:
- 22 to 35 years old
- College graduate of any 4-year course
- Fresh graduates are also encouraged to apply
- Professional sales experience in real estate, pharmaceutical, telecommunication, stock trading or insurance is an advantage

Please bring an updated resume with recent photo and personally apply at

BankAssure Recruitment, 2/F Philippine AXA Life Centre,
Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Cor. Tindalo St., Makati City
Monday - Friday, 8:30am to 3:30pm

You may also send your resume to ba.recruitment@axa.com.ph
For Inquiries, call (02) 885 0101 loc 1238 or (02) 887 2079

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Ministry of Health

Medical Shoes Technicians required for the Artificial Limp Centre Center, Ministry of Health, State of Kuwait with the following requirements:

1. Senior Medical Shoes Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School with Two years diploma course plus 10 (ten) years experience

Job requirements:
- Knowledge of basics of the profession of all medical shoes manufacturing stages
- Knowledge and understanding how to take specific measures of diseases such as Congenital, feet problems, diabetes

2. Medical Shoes Assistant Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School with Two years diploma course

Job requirements:
- Knowledge to take specific measures of diseases such as Gypsum-plastic-leather
- Manufacturing medical shoes with specialization in diseases like Paralysis-Blisters-Minor-knees and feet problems

3. Medical Shoes Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School diploma industrial parts and five years experience

Job requirements:
- Ability to manufacture medical shoes, including feet problems, paralysis machines, Types of back-belts and lower manufacturing parts

4. Parts Manufacturing Technicians (6)

Qualifications:
- Diploma in industrial parts, medical equipment, with five years experience. In addition, should be able to comprehend English language for items mentioned above, the benefit of working in the field along with workstations who uses these Elements in real life situations.

Job requirements:
- Manufacturing Aljabar parts, manufacturing higher element parts and paralysis Substitute equipment.

Salary and Privileges:

The salary will be according to qualification and years of experience as per our Civil Services Commission regulations of the State of Kuwait. Thirty-five days annual leave.

Economy class air tickets to country of residence on joining duty and on termination of contract.

Applications including detailed C.V., copies of qualification and experience certificates, passport copy and names of three references to be sent to the following address:

EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT
1230 Acacia Road Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

IFC
International Finance Corporation
World Bank Group

IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, has been active in the Philippines for more than 40 years and established an office in Manila in 1977. To complement its growing investments, IFC is expanding its advisory services to include public-private partnerships and private sector development. IFC is focusing on Mindanao and opened an office in Davao City in 2006. As part of its advisory services, IFC with support from the Governments of Australia and Canada, established a multilateral program to support the development of small and medium enterprises. **The Agribusiness team is looking for an ASSOCIATE OPERATIONS OFFICER for a Proposed High Value Fruit Sector Technical Assistance Program.**

IFC has been actively scoping the agribusiness sector. This has led to a focus on the high value fruit and coconut sectors and a strong engagement with industry leading companies. IFC's objective is to establish up to two advisory TA programs that link smallholder farmers and SME's to large 'lead firms'. Both programs are expected to develop systemic industry sustainability, and the proposed fruit sector program is expected to have a considerable certification, environmental management and corporate social responsibility (CSR) content. The role requires expertise in the areas of program implementation, management, environmental sustainability, agribusiness and CSR. The AOO will work closely with identified lead firms and IFC agribusiness staff, as well as other relevant parties including smallholder farmers, cooperatives, NGO's, certification bodies and other private and public sector organizations, as appropriate. **The candidate will report to the Agribusiness Program Manager (PM) of IFC Philippines Advisory Services and will be based in the IFC office in DAVAO.**

Qualifications and Position Requirements:

- Graduate or master's qualification in environmental management, agribusiness or similar and/or extensive relevant commercial work experience.
- Extensive experience in the agribusiness sector, in particular working with large agribusiness companies to develop their environmental and CSR policies and procedures, and linking these activities to smallholders and SME's.
- Demonstrated program management and monitoring skills, with good staff management capabilities.
- An innovative thinker with strong personality and able to accept and take responsibility.
- Significant on the ground experience in Mindanao with a particular focus on working with rural communities.
- Strong interpersonal skills with a high level of computer, written and oral presentation skills.
- A proven ability to work in a supportive and enabling team environment.
- Willingness to travel within Mindanao and fluency in appropriate languages.
- Work experience with donor agencies an advantage.

All applications should be E-mailed to KVinluan@ifc.org not later than close of business Friday, January 4th 2008. For corporate information, please visit www.ifc.org.

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MALE OR FEMALE, AT LEAST 23 YEARS OLD
NEW GRADUATES ARE WELCOME BUT EXPERIENCE
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Brgy. Bel-Air II, Makati City
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Tel. No. 890-0102 / 899-7308

CIVIL ENGINEER

Min. 3 years
experience -
Construction/
Building Industry
Excellent
Leadership Skills
Email resumé w/ pic to
tatrm7@yahoo.com
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LICENSED ARCHITECT

Above-ave.
communication/
presentation skills
Knowledgeable in
condo/bldg/land
developments
Part-time basis only
email resumé w/pic to
tatrm7@yahoo.com
or call 09209523620

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CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSOCIATES

- Preferably graduates of any college or associate course OR;
- Must have finished at least 2 years of college
- With excellent verbal and written communication skills in English
- Preferably with collection / sales / hotel reservations experience

TECHNICAL SUPPORT ASSOCIATES

- Preferably graduates of any four-year course OR;
- Must have completed at least 2 years in college with minimum 1 year work experience
- Knowledgeable in hardware and software troubleshooting for desktops and laptops
- With excellent communication skills in English

OTHER BUSINESS SUPPORT POSITIONS AVAILABLE

- Accent and Conversational English (ACE) Trainer
- Human Resources Coordinator / Assistant (Employee Relations / Data Management)
- Administrative Assistant
- Real Time Monitoring (RTM) Specialist
- Training Manager
- Training Supervisor
- Company Nurse (project-based)

Walk-in applicants are welcome:

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1000 Bay Blvd., SM Central Business Park
Bay City (fronting SM Mall of Asia)
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Project Electrical Design Engineer

Principal Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Major Projects Superintendent, the Project Electrical Design Engineer will provide high quality design and project management services. The position will also provide leadership, seek continuous improvement and ensure works are carried out in a safe and efficient manner.

- Providing electrical design and project management services
- Ensuring excellence in electrical design engineering through the management and application of effective design and drawing systems
- Reviewing plant layout, equipment selection and design proposals and make recommendations
- Ensuring the delivery of successful projects in a safe, efficient manner within budget and with quality results
- Being instrumental in the identification, development and implementation of engineering improvements to ensure improved plant performance and lower maintenance costs
- Mentoring electrical project, graduate electrical engineering and drafting personnel

Skills & Experience required:
To be successful for this role, you should have:

- At least 3 years experience in electrical engineering and design roles
- Electrical engineering qualifications
- AutoCAD experience
- Experience in mining or heavy industry would be advantageous
- Effective supervision, leadership and mentoring skills

Project Mechanical Design Engineer

- National Asian Expatriate Position
- Mine site based in Laos
- Permanent position
- FIFO completing a 42 days on and 14 days off roster, with flights provided to place of hire

Principal Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Major Projects Superintendent, the Project Mechanical Design Engineer will provide high quality design and project management services. The position will also provide leadership, seek continuous improvement and ensure works are carried out in a safe and efficient manner.

- Providing mechanical design and project management services
- Ensuring excellence in mechanical design engineering through the management and application of effective design and drawing systems
- Reviewing plant layout, equipment selection and design proposals and make recommendations
- Ensuring the delivery of successful projects in a safe, efficient manner within budget and with quality results
- Being instrumental in the identification, development and implementation of engineering improvements to ensure improved plant performance and lower maintenance costs
- Mentoring mechanical project, graduate mechanical engineering and drafting personnel

Skills & Experience required:
To be successful for this role, you should have:

- At least 3 years experience in mechanical engineering and design roles
- Mechanical engineering qualifications
- AutoCAD experience
- Experience in mining or heavy industry would be advantageous
- Exposure to Bentley AutoPlant software preferable
- Effective supervision, leadership and mentoring skills

Senior Materials Testing Engineer

Principal Responsibilities:

The Senior Materials Testing Engineer will be responsible for ensuring an effective quality control program which is required for the construction of the Phu Kham Copper Gold Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) and other civil infrastructure projects.

- Identifying opportunities and implementing new processes to improve materials testing laboratory operational efficiency and productivity
- Responsibility for ensuring an effective materials testing laboratory service is provided in support of the TSF and other civil projects
- Ensuring the transfer of technical knowledge and development of the Lao workforce
- Quality assurance of testing methods and frequency
- Ensuring the quality control testing program is strictly adhered to
- Recommending modifications to construction techniques to ensure specifications achieved
- Assisting external geotechnical consultants with periodic audits of the laboratory and all required supporting documentation

Skills & Experience required:
To be successful for this role, you should have:

- Significant experience in a similar role at a large scale open cut mining operation
- Significant previous experience in the construction of a TSF
- Demonstrable competence in materials testing methodologies and laboratory techniques
- Problem solving ability for construction of Earthworks structures
- Good reporting skills and strong computer skills including Excel, Access and MS Word
- Previous overseas experience in South East Asia will be highly regarded

Project Supervisor

Principal Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Major Projects Superintendent, the Project Supervisor will provide high quality project supervision and project management services. The position will also provide leadership, seek continuous improvement and ensure works are carried out in a safe and efficient manner.

- Ensuring excellence in mechanical and electrical project construction, installation and commissioning through the use of effective supervision and management
- Ensuring the delivery of successful projects in a safe, efficient manner within budget and with quality results
- Overseeing and managing construction and modification projects, including the coordination of project activities with clients, contractors and regulatory authorities
- Preparing and managing contracts with construction consultants / contractors and overseeing site works
- Being instrumental in the identification, development and implementation of engineering improvements to ensure improved plant performance and lower maintenance costs

Skills & Experience required:
To be successful for this role, you should have:

- At least 3 years experience in a similar project supervision and management role
- Effective supervision, leadership and mentoring skills
- Strong communication, coordination and organisational skills
- Engineering qualifications or a trades background would be preferred

Shutdown Planner

Principal Responsibilities:

Reporting to the Major Projects Superintendent, the Shutdown Planner will provide high quality technical and administrative services to complete approved shutdown maintenance planning work.

- Ensuring shutdown work is planned, scheduled and managed with a high level of professional project management
- Creating, reviewing and managing shutdown related outstanding work, backlog, schedules, work packs and other associated tasks
- Ensuring the work order process is of high quality and work order data is accurate
- Ensuring parts for shutdown are ordered, received and organised prior to the start of the shutdown
- Coordinating and organising labor, contractors and equipment including logistics, inductions and checks
- Liaising with maintenance planning, reliability engineering, project engineering and operations
- Assisting in the development and optimisation of reoccurring shutdowns
- Assisting in the budget development, tracking and forecasting
- Assisting with reporting of shutdown metrics and shutdown risk management
- Collecting and maintaining shutdown documentation and maintaining shutdown management procedures

Skills & Experience required:
To be successful for this role, you should have:

- Significant experience in a planner role with 3 years plus experience
- Ability to liaise and communicate effectively with multiple areas / departments
- Effective coordination and organisational skills
- Strong reporting and computer skills including MS Word, Excel and Project
- Pronto software program exposure will be advantageous

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centaurrecruit@mydestiny.net
centaur_manila@yahoo.com.ph

CEBU OFFICE: 2nd floor, Zosa Building (ESKINA),
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PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY HEALTH

Field Implementation Coordinator – Mindanao

Background:

The PRISM Project is geared towards increasing Family Planning initiatives in the private sector. It supports USAID/Philippines' Strategic objective 3, *desired family size and improved health sustainability achieved.* The project will focus on three components: (1) increased workplace support for family planning (FP) services and referrals; (2) establishment of viable, mass market brands of hormonal contraceptives; and, (3) increased business value of FP among private practice providers.

The project understands that a geographic approach using the strategic intervention plan (SIP) and its criteria will be essential in fast tracking its deliverables while prioritizing its areas and personnel to maximize its efforts and gains. Area-based planning and implementation is further seen as key to understanding the dynamics of the institutions and stakeholders in the identified areas. This is seen to lead to better results-based and output-oriented activities in aid of responsive project implementation. This in turn will purposively achieve our project goals and objectives.

To achieve this, we will be engaging Field Implementation Coordinators in the identified Strategic Intervention Areas (SIA). The FI Coordinator will be coordinating with the three area component personnel managers assigned accordingly, the technical operations and the project management support group who will be underpinning the recognized plans and activities.

Objectives:

The FI Coordinator will be in-charge of harnessing the potential for installing a private sector initiative for family planning in the strategic intervention area. He/she will concentrate on coming up with plans and activities as how family planning can be integrated in the workplace, thereby creating a demand. Then, through the development of the market (for oral and injectable contraceptives) as well as encouraging the private sector service providers, especially the midwives – become part of the supply that will service the generated demand. While doing this, he/she must be cognizant of and coordinate with the different PRISM components and harmonize the activities so that it will help achieve project deliverables.

General Tasks:

- Develop an overall PRISM strategic intervention area work plan together with the three component directors and the technical director;
- Initiate, organize and integrate activities of the three components in support of the overall area plans and objectives;
- Work with the different PRISM technical specialists on gender, monitoring and evaluation, outreach, training and quality assurance to ensure adequate support to our partners;
- Work with PRISM technical and management staff to implement approaches and strategies to counteract potential opposition to project activities from social forces such as faith-based groups;
- Refine the strategies mapped out in the work plan in order to maximize results from them; coordinate with the monitoring and evaluation specialist to validate indicators of success for the area program;
- Submit monthly updates/regular reports on activities, agreements and issues relating to the individual components as well as relating to the program as a whole (integrated/cross-cutting), including a monthly calendar of upcoming activities;
- Following the PRISM "work through" principle, help identify and assist potential project partners in their application for PRISM grants and in the implementation of the same;
- Liase with relevant business, professional and civic organizations, private sector FP providers, USAID Cooperating Agencies, and local government units (LGUs) to forge partnerships for family planning initiatives;
- Coordinate regularly with our private and public sector liaison officers to aid support activities and initiatives to these sectors accordingly; and,
- Complete other tasks and assignments, as deemed appropriate.

Qualifications:

- College graduate
- Minimum of 3 years experience in liaising and dealing with the business sector, specifically with HR Managers, CEO of companies, healthcare organizations and service providers (doctor's groups, drugstores, midwives, nurses, etc.) organizing events
- Previous project management experience is an advantage
- Very skilled in various computer applications
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent organizational and analytical skills

Reporting:

The FI Coordinator will report directly to the Regional Operations Manager

Interested applicants should e-mail their application letter and CV at jobs@prism.org.ph on or before Dec. 31, 2007. Please indicate the **"Position Code: FIC"** as the subject in the email.

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He/she must be: 35 years old or older; a servant leader committed to democratic and participatory management; a Filipino citizen; ready to be based in Metro Manila and willing to travel extensively.

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Please send your application and resumé by post or courier to SEEDFINANCE Corporation, Suite 49 PARC House Bldg., 227 EDSA Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, 1566, via email to new_sfmd@yahoo.com or fax to telefax 02-7264258. Deadline for applications is on January 14, 2008. All applications will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted.

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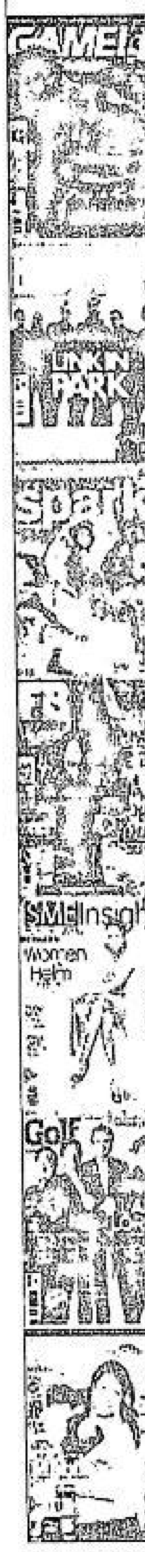

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- College Graduate,Major in Management, Economics or Marketing.
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Qualifications:
- College graduate of a computer and/or designing course. Preferably with publication layout background.
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- Organized, resourceful, creative
- Willing to work overtime and thrives under pressure.

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Qualifications:
- College Graduate, Major in Marketing, Advertising, or Mass Communication.
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- Excellent communication, presentation, writing, interpersonal, analytical, planning, and organization skills.

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- First-hand experience in creating websites is a plus (personal page or otherwise).
- Basic Adobe Photoshop skills

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Qualifications:
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- Knowledge on marketing concepts.
- Proficiency in basic computer operations (Word, Excel, Powerpoint)
- Knowledge of basic design software applications an advantage. (Photoshop, InDesign)
- Excellent communication, presentation, writing, interpersonal, analytical, planning, and organization skills.

Interested applicants may send their resumes to any of the ff.: jlimbo@inquirer.com.ph, [illegible]@inquirer.com.ph, jreyes@inquirerpublications.ph; hrd@hip.ph or bring their resume, two (2) 2x2 photos, Transcript of Records, and any valid I.D. at Unit 330, Mile Long Building, Amorsolo corner Javier Streets, Makati City, from Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Tel Nos.: 759-2284, 759-2024, 840-0196, 813-6848

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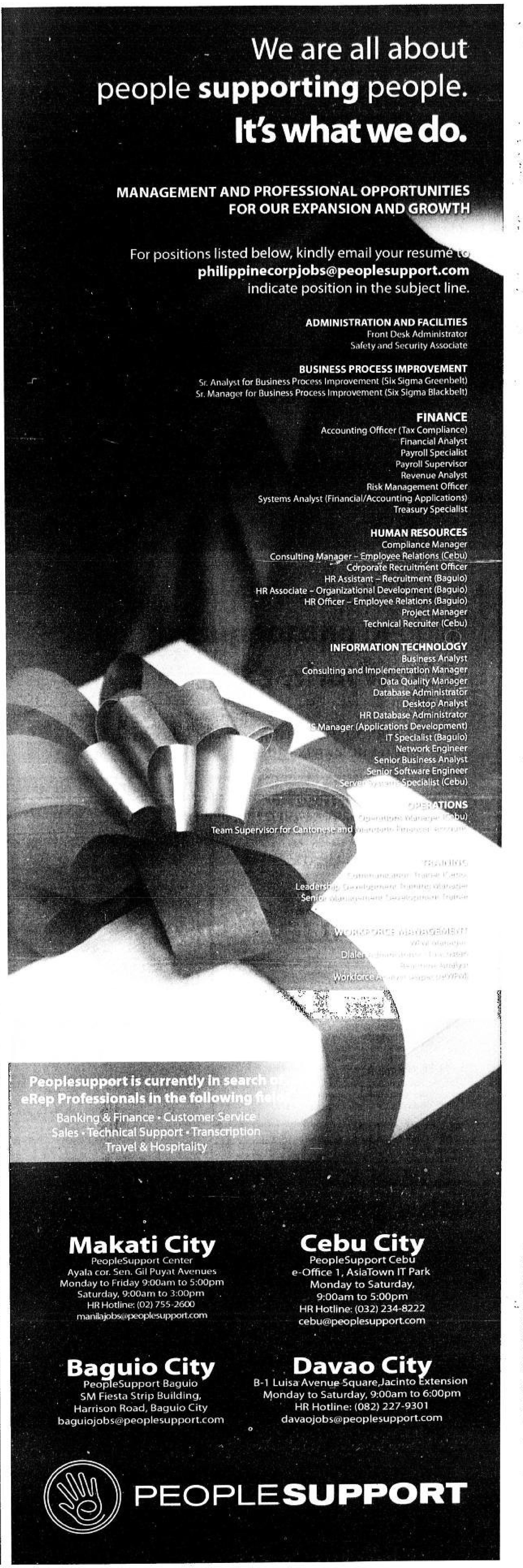

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Consulting Manager – Employee Relations (Cebu)
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in Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang
is in urgent need of an:

ASSISTANT TO THE COUNTRY MANAGER

Requirements:

- Preferably Pharmacist, or college graduate of any medical or any business courses
- Pleasing extrovert personality
- Excellent in English communication and interpersonal skills (verbal, written, listening)
- Loyal and honest
- Able to work under high pressure and willing to work extended hours
- Excellent computer skills (MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, Internet and troubleshooting)
- Able to prepare public presentations and speak in front of audiences
- Resourceful, able to find and gather information from multiple sources to solve problems independently
- Basic accounting experience
- Flexible to adapt to changing priorities and multiple tasks
- Fast learner and self starter
- Able to adjust to foreign attitudes and habits
- Minimum 3 years relevant working experience
- Age requirement: 23 to 40 years old, exciting and mature personality.

The Regional Headquarter is responsible for all activities in the Asia Pacific Region. The position above reports to the Country Manager, Philippines.

Please send your resumé (with photo) and application letter including salary expectations to: Ground Floor (Reception Area), Richville Corporate Tower Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang, on or before Dec. 31, 2007. Interviews shall be scheduled in early January 2008.

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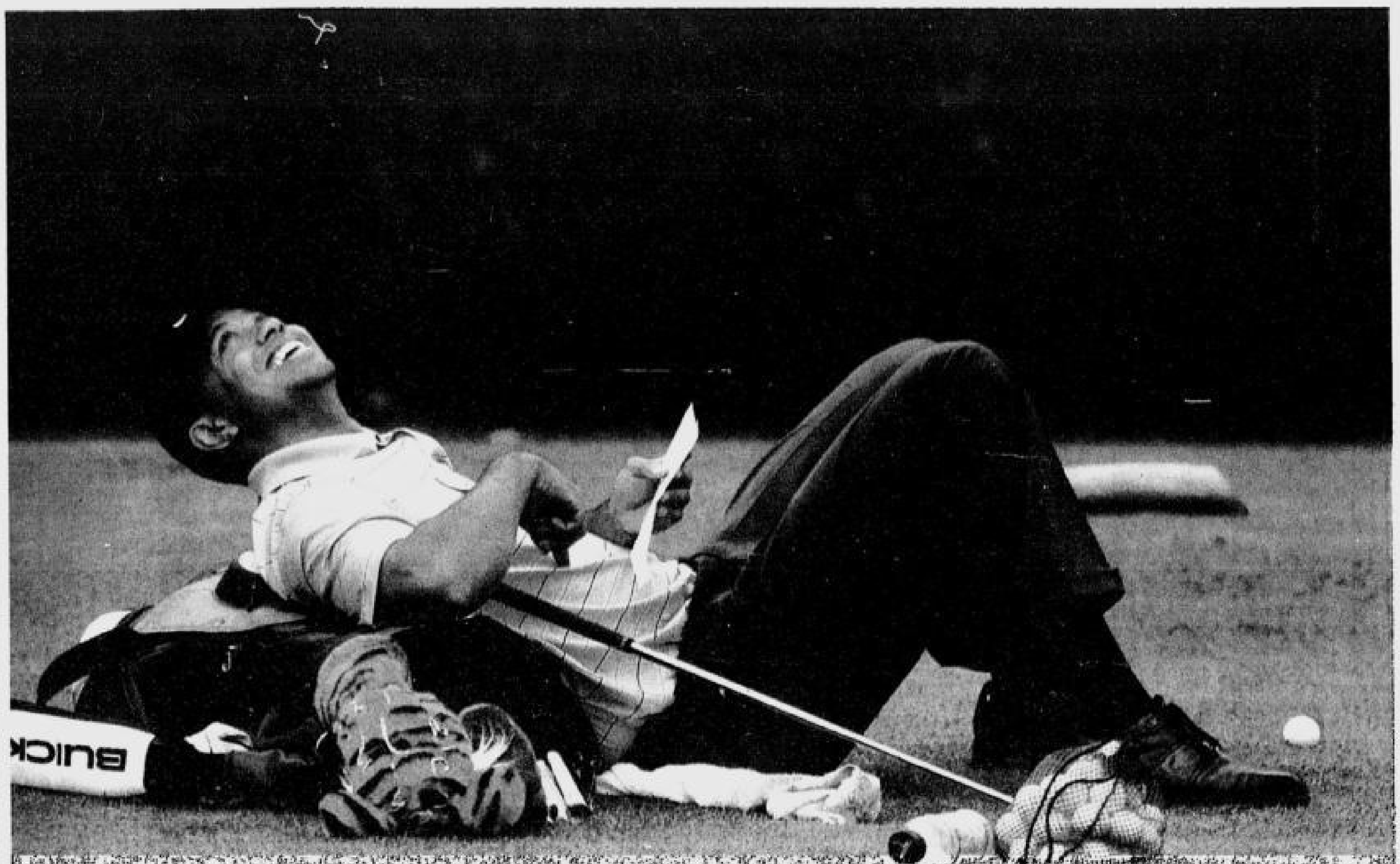

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Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

WONDER WORKING WOMEN

Raising women from the rank and file

By Roel A. Andag
Contributor

WORKING FILIPINAS ARE HARvesting world acclaim. A 2007 Thornton International Business Report study ranked the Philippines on top of 32 countries in terms of number of women in senior management positions. The same study noted that 97 percent of businesses in the Philippines have women in senior management positions—a remarkable rate compared to the global average of 59 percent. In a related development, Fortune magazine's Oct. 15 issue ranked SM Investments Vice Chairman Teresita Sy-Coson number 41 in its prestigious roster of 50 Most Powerful Women in Global Business.

Studies explain that women excel in the workplace because of their perseverance, creativity, dedication, attentiveness to detail, flexibility and emotional intelligence. My work oftentimes requires working with women executives who effortlessly demonstrate their sense of direction and purpose, passion, intellect, empathy and sense of humor.

The Department of Labor and Employment reported that in 2006 there were 2.3 million women in supervisory positions. If there is this many women managers, there are more women among the rank and file. Whether inspired by their high-ranking sisters, driven by personal ambition or by economic necessity, a good number of women in the rank and file aspire for management positions. Career planning and outstanding work performance is their legitimate vehicle for reaching the desired destination. Management and HR can help propel the careers of worthy women with the following:

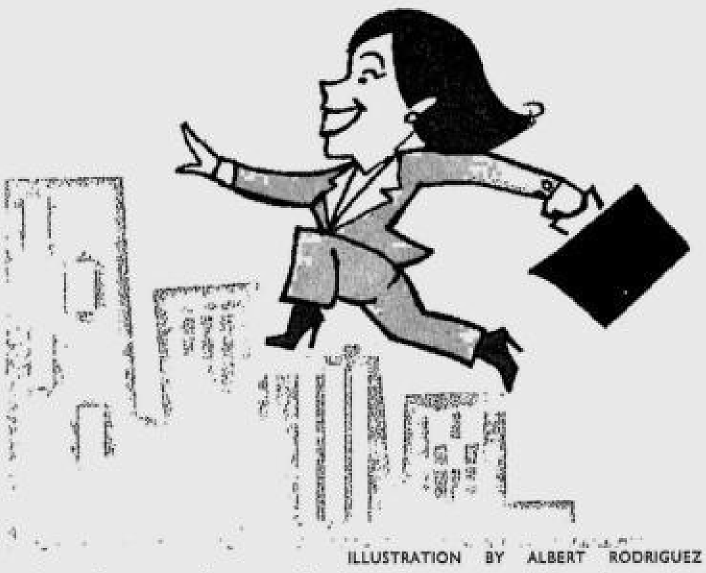

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Build a diversity-friendly workplace. Many Fortune 100 companies, Chevron among them, are employers of choice because of gender mainstreaming. Your company does not have to be in any prestigious list to build a diversity-friendly workplace. Start by being open to its added values, among which are: attracting talent, knowledge sharing, boosting employee morale, diversity awareness and improved public perception. The idea is to create a work environment of productive codependence on the strength of men and women's equal dignity and value. Ensure that physical and organizational structures support the needs and aspirations of women employees. Conducting gender sensitivity seminars will help inculcate respect and eliminate harm and exploitation.

Spot potential early on. Use performance appraisal metrics to identify potential candidates for talent development. Observe the employee's achievement orientation, decision-making, leadership and teamwork, and communication skills among others. These are reliable predictors of future managerial performance. Target, say, those belonging to the top 20 percent high potential women workers for career development.

Develop, demand, recognize. Having identified high-potential women, it is time to ask them to submit a simple plan that identifies their development needs. In response, give them necessary training and mentoring. Encourage them to embark on self-initiated development to supplement company-sponsored learning opportunities. Assign more challenging tasks to them and acknowledge their accomplishments. Create feedback mechanisms.

Equal opportunity promotion. Being an equal opportunity employer is a start. Once inside the organization, men and women should be enabled to enjoy equal salaries and compete for promotions based on clear qualification criteria. The glass ceiling—the invisible barrier that, on account of gender stereotypes, prevents women from reaching the top of the corporate ladder—has to be shattered.

Celebrate working women. Organize the company's women into a group that can contribute to the well-being of its members, the company and society. It can be the company's major social responsibility. Organize fun activities aimed at recognizing women's participation in the company. These activities can be conducted on a monthly or quarterly basis, with major activities during Women's Month, which is celebrated in March. They should include learning sessions where women executives and those in rank and file can interact. Women leaders from various sectors can also be invited for lectures.

The call to action is not for companies to give special treatment to women but to eliminate gender-based workplace biases that deprive women and companies they work for of tremendous benefits. As the world congratulates the Philippines for the success of its women managers, Filipino companies should support women in the rank and file by developing them into second liners, future managers and business leaders.

(The author is an independent training and communication consultant. Feedback at http://success-system.blogspot.com)

Freedom from being victimized

I AM 23 YEARS OLD, WORKing for two years in a security agency owned by a retired military officer. I wanted to switch to a career in human resources after I enrolled in a graduate course in industrial relations last year.

I think I can easily develop the skills required to succeed in an HR career.

What bothers me is my lack of assertiveness. All these years, I have played second fiddle or victim. I am the last child in a family of seven, had been pushed around by bullies in school, was trained to obey first before I complain and must have been conditioned to follow and obey. I realize that all these had contributed to my "weak" personality, dependence on others, and a feeling of being a victim in many situations.

Can you please advise me how to overcome these negative traits so that I can succeed in my career?

Vic Tim

ASK YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR
Ernie O. Cecilia

I can see your difficulty, but it is something you can easily overcome if you choose to. Your situation is deep-rooted. As a child, you were often pushed over because of your stature in the family. Your six other siblings were older, stronger and well-entrenched when you came to the family. It is natural that they would have their way and you would follow. You said you were also bullied in school. Perhaps, you might have even accepted the bullying as natural, since you also experience it in the family. As you grew up, you allowed others to pull your strings and perhaps believed that there was nothing you could do to take control of your own life.

In a situation like this, it is normal for you to think that you have to toe the line drawn by others, go along with the agenda of the bigger people in your life, and that there were no alternatives for you. It is natural for people in a situation like yours to go along and accept it as the reality.

This might have become the most sensible arrangement for you, as you allowed others to think what is right for you and for your life.

Childhood habits

Often, childhood habits get carried over to adult years. In the workplace, there will still be bullies. Your childhood habits can set you up as a victim of "bigger" people. Your present work environment seems perfect for the setup. In fact, you mentioned that you are "trained to obey first before you complain." It sounds like military training and it seems that in your present environment, you will perpetrate your childhood experiences of being victimized.

They say that old habits are hard to die. It is correct. But, you can discard old habits. How? You simply develop new habits that will take the place of old habits you want to discard. These new habits can be learned the same way as your old habits—through practice. Some experts say that if you keep doing something continuously for a month, it will become a habit.

The first step is to realize what bad habits you want to change, what new habits you want to acquire, and start practicing new habits as you discard old habits.

Eureka

That you want to switch careers can be the breakthrough you could just be waiting for to change your life—unless the switch was dictated again by other people.

For a moment, I thought you had exercised your freedom to choose. Or maybe, you did!

In reality, nobody can give you that freedom on a silver platter. If you want to be free, you must declare your own freedom. If that freedom is given to you by someone else, he will most likely ask something in exchange for it. A colonizer never sets a colony free and a kidnapper never sets a hostage free, unless in exchange for something of value.

In your situation, you must realize that other people are ruling your life.

There are obstructions and restraints that others impose on you. To put it bluntly, that is a form of slavery. You allow others to choose how you should live your life.

I remember what the great Epictetus said, "No man is free who is not master of himself."

Freedom

Perhaps, the freest people are those who have inner peace about themselves.

They live the lives they choose, regardless of what others say or do. These people live freely but do not deny their responsibilities to their loved ones and others. Yes, you can be both free and responsible. When you try to be truly free, expect others to call you "selfish" simply because you will learn to disregard what they want and you will choose what you want.

That's unfair. There is no law that prevents you from doing what you want, provided you don't step on others' toes.

I am free, but I am responsible—and I am not enslaved by other people's silly notions and interpretations of what responsibility means. I do what I love, and love what I do, and I respect the rights of others, too.

Tips

In the labor relations seminars I had been running with several companies, I usually summarize the essence of rights or freedoms in a single sentence,

"My right to swing my arms stops where your nose begins."

Here are a few tips, so that you can overcome your problem and learn to use your freedom to choose:

Review your situation carefully. Keep your eyes open, be alert and improve the quality of your thoughts. Whenever you deal or transact with others, understand what other people need, but be clear about your own personal objectives in getting into that deal or transaction. Be constantly aware of your needs, wants and goals.

Develop new attitudes and expectations. Do not expect to be a victim of others.You usually get what you expect. Increase the quality of your expectations of yourself—that you will no longer be victimized by others.

Expect to be a happy, healthy, fully operational individual—based on your present capacities. Later, you can develop your potential, but you must start with your real capabilities so that you don't expect too much, too soon from yourself.

Analyze where you are victimized. As you adjust your expectations, be keenly aware of situations where you are usually victimized. Try to be alert and cope with these situations well. Know that victimization can happen in the family, at work, with authority figures, the bureaucracy and even with yourself—you, with your usual self-defeating thoughts and habits.

Use your imagination and think of ways that you can again fall victim to others who want to rule your life. Use the same imaginative power to think of ways to overcome your being a victim.

In closing, let me remind you of a favorite quote on the subject from Archibald MacLeish, "Freedom is the right to choose: the right to create for yourself the alternatives of choice. Without the possibility of choice and the exercise of choice, a man is not a man but a member, an instrument, a thing."

As God's creation, we are given free will. Use it or lose it!

(The author is chair of the IR Committee of the American Chamber of Commerce and chair of ECOP's Long Range Policy Planning Committee. He is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a human resource consulting firm. Feedback at ernie_cecilia@yahoo.com)

Gospel: Mt. 11:2-11

Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."

A saving grace

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

THE JEWS AT THE TIME OF JESUS WERE EXPECTING A SAVIOR, to deliver them from their many kinds of suffering—personal, economic, social, political and spiritual ones. Jesus confirmed that He was the Messiah to those whom John the Baptist had sent to verify whether it was He whom they were waiting for.

He pointed out to them that many sick people have been healed and the poor given the "good news"—that people are being made whole in their being, rather than being given material things, like money with which they can buy their freedom from any kind of evil or with which they can have more things to enjoy. Jesus provided a different kind of salvation, or rather, a more complete kind of salvation which would grant the believer true freedom and happiness.

In our times, work for many is some kind of a savior saving them and their families from material, physical, or financial poverty and providing them with satisfaction and happiness in at least what money gained from work can buy. For others who may be suffering from psychological pains such as boredom, loneliness, sense of worthlessness and others, work could also be a source of healing for them. Yet, ironically, work could also be the oppressor for others. Some would be enslaved, overburdened and distressed by too much work. Some would get burnt out, physically and mentally spent due to excessive working.

What then could save work from being an oppressor to the worker and transform it to his veritable savior? When work is taken up with Jesus—the worker believing in Him as the Messiah present among us in our day-to-day activities—and, when it is done with love and sacrifice in union with Him. Work then, becomes a saving grace. *(E-mail the author at preciousbishop@yahoo.com)*

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

Awed by miracles

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

FOR SOME (OR MANY?) PEOPLE, WORK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT thing in life—so important that they would work even on Sundays and holidays. Filipinos overseas taking two or three jobs to earn a living are no longer uncommon for us; almost every other middle-class Pinoy has some migrant relatives abroad who tell them of their hardships earning precious dollars, euros or dinari.. And yet, I observe that even from among such workaholics you'll find those who would not hesitate to drop whatever work they're doing in order to make time for a mystery. This is what today's Gospel leads me to think.

One concrete example: a number of colleagues—all a hardworking lot—take leave from their work in order to be free to consult a visiting Filipino Catholic priest who has earned a worldwide reputation for being a miracle worker. This healer-priest is known to have made the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the dead to rise again. They exclaim, "*Nakabuhay ng patay*?! *Nakakamangha, di ba*?" thus the workaholics find time for him—to beg healing for their myriad aches and pains.If such a keen need for a healing medium does not make us see that there is Something or Someone Else more important than our work, then the healing encounter would not be completely beneficial—it may even do more harm than good. You've heard, of course, of people who earn so much money all their life only to spend it all on hospital bills? We ought to see that our being workaholics indicates a certain lack of balance in our lifestyle. If we consciously attend to First Things first—listen to the Source of our very existence first, even only for a few moments each day—we will be perfectly guided as to the use of our bodies, talents and resources. Then we will not be awed by miracle cures, miracle drugs and miracle workers. We become the miracle. *(E-mail the author at teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)*

How employers can share the spirit of Christmas

By Loree Cruz-Mante
Contributor

IN THE WORKPLACE, THE IDEA OF sharing becomes pronounced at Christmastime as coworkers exchange gifts, enjoy the office party, and take their holiday break. Employees can look forward to the mandated 13th month pay to cover the additional costs of merry-making and gift-giving.

Employers, on the other hand, participate in the spirit of sharing in various ways, depending on factors affecting the business in the year about to end. Some employers give generous bonuses at Christmastime, based on profits made or performance-related achievements. Others give Christmas baskets containing goodies for Noche Buena. Still others let their employees off for several days, if not altogether stop operations until the New Year.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Real sharing

There are many more things, however, that employers can do to make the spirit of sharing real for their employees.

It all begins with how employers regard those who work to bring in the profits for the business. What is the company's view of human resources? Are employees considered partners who labor to deliver the goods and services on which the company makes money? Or are they mere hired hands who should feel justly compensated enough with the salary they receive?

Caring for employees

Employers who share their bounty are those who are grateful that they have employees who bring in the profits for them. They recognize the contribution of their employees and believe that workers, too, should share in the gains.

After all, if these employees did not bring in the revenues, will the employers make any money?

This thought hit me loudly and clearly as I was having my nails done in a favorite beauty parlor.

That afternoon, the air was filled with unusual excitement. Everyone was in a holiday mood. I was told that the Christmas party was going to be held that night.

There were many things I learned about the company that ran the beauty parlor. It was a big conglomerate with about 40 salons all over the country.

The staff were well-paid, with generous bonuses twice a year. On top of the remuneration package was an incentive system that rewarded outstanding performance. There was also profit-sharing at year-end based on how much the company made each year.

There were regular contests and awards given to branches with outstanding performance in the different services offered in the salon. Teamwork was well-rewarded with an awards program for branch performance.

Proof of employee satisfaction was the impressive record of low turnover, with many pioneers still in the company's employ to this day.

A grand event

Each year, the employees looked forward to the Christmas grand event. It filled their conversations and fueled their motivation for the entire year.

On the day of the party, each of the salon staff was entitled to experience the services their salon offered to customers: haircut, manicure/pedicure, shampoo, blow-dry, styling, makeup. That afternoon, the staff were taking turns servicing each other. It was a joy seeing each one trying to make co-workers look their best.

I was told that at exactly six o'clock, the salon would close, three hours earlier than the usual closing time. A bus would then come and pick them up and bring them to the party site. The following day, reporting time was at 12 noon instead of the usual 9 a.m. to allow them to party until early morning.

The Christmas party was usually held at a plush hotel. Awards and rewards, raffles and gifts were the usual fare during the occasion. It was also the time for surprise announcements by the management, all intended as a way of thanking the employees for their contribution to the company's growth.

I had a ringside view of what all these company practices meant to employees working for employers who knew how to share their blessings.

If the spirit of sharing is to be real at all for employees, it should go beyond employers giving merely what is mandated by law. It should go beyond the usual trappings of the season. It should go beyond the Christmas goodies and the best-intentioned wishes.

(The author is a freelance HR and career consultant, trainor and writer. E-mail her at lcmante@yahoo.com)

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- Candidate must possess a Bachelor's/College Degree in Computer Science/Information Technology or equivalent.
- At least 4 years of working experience in the related field is required for this position.
- Preferably Supervisor/ 3 years & up experienced employees specializing in IT/Computer-Software/Hardware or equivalent.
- Expected to plan, research, develop logic, code, test and deploy programs or applications with minimal assistance.
- Strong analytical and technical skills and ability to multi-task.

For interested applicants you may send your resume to: **HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**, 340 G. Araneta Ave., Q.C. look for Ms. Liza /Email Address: bcshrd@gmail.com /Tel..No.7140846 to 48 loc.112

Home entertainment has been transformed—high definition, realistic gaming, and theater-quality sound.

Be part of the company whose test systems help ensure the quality of electronics used in our everyday lives.

We're the test experts behind many of today's electronics products—cell phones, portable music players, gaming systems, automotive electronics and more. Teradyne's customers are the world's leading electronics companies, and we ride the wave of technical innovation and change every day. It's an exciting, dynamic business, and we need talented people who can contribute right away.

Marketing Specialist

(to be based in Cebu)

The Marketing Specialist will be responsible for understanding the requirements of a service business as both a stand-alone business and as an augmentation to Teradyne's out-of-production business. S/he will also be responsible for developing a thorough understanding of Teradyne's competitive position, positioning out-of-production products, developing new service products that leverage Teradyne's existing core competencies, growing our service revenue and integration within the service team to improve the strategic position of the division, and developing the organizational capability of the marketing function.

Requirements

The successful candidate will have 5-10 years of previous marketing/sales experience along with demonstrated leadership, the ability to communicate effectively at a broad range of level of abstraction and management levels, and strong quantitative and qualitative problem solving skills. S/he should be a passionate and energetic specialist with strong leadership and customer focused skills.

For interested and qualified applicants, please visit **http://www.teradyne.com/hr/jobs.html** to submit your application and résumé, or email them to michelle.siarez@teradyne.com.
Submission deadline: December 19, 2007

TERADYNE
Because Testing Matters

Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Australian Embassy in Manila is seeking applications for the positions listed below. If you have excellent written and verbal English communication skills and meet each of the selection criteria for the position of interest, you are invited to submit an application.

Positions being recruited to are·

- **Administrative and Compliance Assistant** – Salary: PHP 44,219.88 / month
- **Technical Officer** (Chancery and Residences) – Salary: PHP 44,219.88 / month
- **Human Resources Officer** – Salary: PHP 35,699.87 / month
- **Administrative Assistant** (Accounts) – Salary: PHP 35,699.87 / month

Job descriptions and selection criteria for each of these positions are listed under job vacancies at **http://www.australia.com.ph/mnla/aboutus.html.** The successful candidates will be entitled to leave, performance bonus, comprehensive health insurance and other conditions of service. The positions are offered initially on three month probation.

Interested parties should submit a written application clearly setting out their claims against each of the selection criteria together with a resumé and transcript of records, with names of two referees and their contact details. Applications that do not meet and clearly address each of the selection criteria will not be considered. All applications should be sent via email on or before 4 January 2008 to manila.recruitment@dfat.gov.au.

The selection process will be strictly merit-based.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF VACANT POSITION

The National Research Council of the Philippines (**NRCP**) is in search of an **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** (Salary Grade 28), for a term of three (3) years.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

Education : At least a Master of Science/Master of Arts and other Master's Degree
Membership : Must be a Regular or Associate member of NRCP (as provided by its By-Laws).
Experience : (a) Must have occupied a supervisory or management position for a period of at least three (3) years; and (b) Must have experience in administration of research programs in various disciplines or of mission-oriented multidisciplinary research programs.

Application letter must be addressed to:

The Chairman
Search Committee for NRCP Executive Director

Please send in all applications by e-mail to nrcpdirectorsearch@yahoo.com and post by registered mail to:

c/o Dr. Alvin B. Culaba
Director for Center for Engineering and
Sustainable Development Research (CESDR)
De La Salle University-Manila
2401 Taft Avenue, Malate, Manila
1004 Philippines

Please enclose updated curriculum vitae with three (3) references, certification of previous management experience, diploma of highest degree earned and one 2" x 2" picture. Applications must be received by NRCP before 4:00 p.m. of *8 January 2008. For inquiries, please contact the NRCP Personnel Section at (632) 837-6143 or (632) 839-0275.*

An IMPORT COMPANY is in need of:

1. WAREHOUSE SUPERVISOR / COLLECTOR / MESSENGER

- Male, not more than 40 years old
- must possess at least a vocational or college degree in any field
- Good moral character, interpersonal and communication skills
- knows how to drive a motorcycle with valid driver's license
- with at least 6 months relative experience

2. ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR / STAFF

- Female, not more than 40 years old
- must be a college degree graduate of Accounting
- Good moral character, trustworthy and hardworking
- computer literate, preferably familiar with 'QUICKBOOKS' software
- With at least 2 years relative experience in handling company accounts (Payables and Receivables) and finances

Successful candidates will receive above-average compensation package.
Interested parties may fax resumé to 783-9747

CAVDEAL

CAVITE IDEAL INTERNATIONAL CONST.
AND DEV. CORP.

CAVDEAL – Cavite Ideal International Construction and Development Corporation, a PCAB accredited AAA category general contracting firm, is in urgent need of competent personnel to fill the following positions:

1. **Accountants and Auditors**
   - Preferably CPA with 3-5 years work experience
   - Computer literate
2. **Mall Administrator** (for affiliated company)
   - Preferably female
   - Graduate of any Business course from reputable schools
   - With at least 5 years experience in leasing, marketing, and administration
3. **Commercial Arcade Administrator** (for affiliated company)
   - At least 27 years old
   - Graduate of any Business course with at least 5 years experience as Manager/ Administrator
4. **QSR Store Manager** (for affiliated company)
   - At least 24 years old
   - With at least 3 years experience as manager of a fast food restaurant
   - Graduate of Business Management, Nutrition and Diet or a related course
5. **Project Engineers, Motorpool Engineers, Materials Engineers**
   - Licensed with at least 5 yrs experience in roads, bridges, and similar construction works
   - Must be between 32-45 years old
6. **Quantity Engineers**
   - Licensed Engineers with at least 5 years experience in estimate and billing preparation
   - Computer competent
7. **Heavy Equipment Operators and Drivers**
   - Must be holders of a Professional Driver's License
   - With at least 5 years experience related to the job applied for
8. **Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Auto Electricians, Industrial Electricians**
   - With good troubleshooting skills with at least 5 years experience
9. **Maintenance Personnel (plumbers, carpenters, electrician)**
   - Must have at least 3 years experience as maintenance personnel
10. **Liaison Officer** (for affiliated company)
11. **Marketing Manager** (for affiliated company)
    - Must have 3-5 years experience computer competence

All candidates must have good moral character, excellent communication skills, and self motivated. Interested applicants must submit resumé, with Transcript of Records (TOR), latest 2x2 colored picture, NBI, Police and Barangay clearances to CAVDEAL, 230 CAVDEAL Building., EDSA Extension, San Rafael, Pasay City, Metro Manila OR may email to **base@cavdeal.com** not later than December 21, 2007, or visit **www.cavdeal.com**

State of Kuwait

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Health, State of Kuwait the following categories of technicians:

1. **Echo Technician**
2. **Cath Lab Technician**

Qualification:

- Bachelor's degree in the respective field plus 2 (two) years experience (preferred).

Job requirements:

- Thorough knowledge of the profession.
- Good Command of English.

Applications including detailed C.V., copies of qualification and experience certificates, with passport copy to be sent to the following address:

EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT
1230 Acacia Road Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

CCF PHILIPPINES

An International NGO working for the well-being of children is currently seeking development professionals for its new Area Office serving Dipolog City, Municipalities of Roxas, Sindangan, and Manukan, Zamboanga Del Norte

AREA MANAGER

Job Description:
Mainly responsible for ensuring that planning, development and implementation of programs and projects for children and youth in the area are according to CCF standards. Leads the process of area strategic planning ensuring the quality participation of children, youth, parents and other stakeholders in the area.

Qualifications:

- Relevant university degree with at least five years work experience. A Post-graduate degree is preferred.
- At least three years work experience in executive management, program design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and report writing
- Demonstrated record of experience in communication, finance, human resource management and fund raising support
- Competent in human resource, program and financial management
- Excellent leadership, decision making, management, problem solving and judgment skills.
- Should be analytical, organized, self-motivated, adaptable, reliable and service oriented.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Willingness to be posted in Dipolog City and to travel to project areas

AREA SPONSOR RELATIONS OFFICER

Job Description:
Responsible for the planning, administration, coordination and monitoring of all Area sponsorship activities and communication requirements.

Qualifications:

- Relevant university degree with at least three years work experience as a development professional
- Demonstrated record of experience in communication, administrative support, planning strategies and/ or human relations
- Competent in project management and basic office administration
- Excellent leadership, relationship building, resource mobilization, problem solving and judgment skills.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Willingness to be posted in Dipolog City and to travel to project areas

AREA FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Job Description:
The Area Finance and Administrative Officer will be responsible for the financial reporting, general accounting policies and procedures, budgets, financial analyses audits and legal, personnel and administrative functions in the Area Office.

Qualifications:

- Preferably a Certified Public Accountant with some post secondary units in Accounting or related field
- At least three years work experience in auditing, accounting/bookkeeping activities, budget preparation and office administration in an NGO
- Demonstrated experience in communication, administrative support, planning strategies and human relations skills
- Demonstrated ability to provide effective secretarial services to policy and project implementation
- Computer literate; knowledge and skills in accounting computer software an advantage
- Competent in accounting principles and procedures and office administration
- Excellent decision making, communication, supervisory, coordination, problem solving and judgment skills.
- Willingness to be posted in Dipolog City and to travel to project areas

Interested applicants may send their application letter addressing the position criteria outlined here together with detailed Curriculum Vitae with 3 references and contact details to ccfno@ccfphilippines.org.ph not later than December 21, 2007. Applications can also be posted to CCF Philippines, 8th Floor, Strata 100 Building, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Due to the volume of applications we receive we shall only contact short listed applicants

---

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

CHAUFFEUR

Incumbent will operate various vehicles to transport personnel to points throughout the country. Familiarity with Metro Manila streets essential.

QUALIFICATIONS: Must have completed high school, at least three (3) years professional driving experience, preferably with a government or industrial/commercial establishment. Must have driver's license restriction code 2, 3 and 4 (attach a copy of your license) and able to drive both manual and automatic transmission vehicle. Must be familiar with locations of important offices, streets in Metro Manila and suburbs. Must have an excellent driving record. Must be able to pass full physical including eye and hearing. Must have strong interpersonal and team work skills.

COMPENSATION : Competitive salary (including mid-year and year-end bonuses), health and life, and retirement plan is offered.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NOT LATER THAN DECEMBER 28, 2007

SEND LETTER OF APPLICATION WITH COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ TO:

Human Resources Division
P.O. Box EA 423
1000 Ermita, Manila

INQUIRER PUBLICATIONS, INC.

PAYROLL STAFF

- College graduate (any business course)
- With 3 years experience in similar field
- knowledge of payroll system, SSS, BIR and other government regulations
- knowledge of Corporate Taxation Law and basic labor. laws
- experience in bank payroll transactions
- Mathematical ability and analytical skills
- basic computer operations

Send your application (with photo) NOW to the:

The Human Resources (c/o IPI)
PDI Building
Pasong Tamo corner Yague and Mascardo Sts.
Makati City 1200
or email to: jreyes@inquirerpublications.ph;
spanillo@inquirer.com.ph

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- With at least 6 months to 1 year experience in General Accounting and/or Credit & Collection work
- Knowledge of basic computer operations
- Can work under pressure and with minimal supervision

SECRETARY

- College graduate preferably BS Secretarial Course / Office Management
- 1 yr experience in related job
- Knowledge of basic office and e-mail software
- Knowledge of basic computer operations

COMPUTER ENGINEER

- Graduate of Computer Engineering / ECE
- 6 months to 1 year experience on this job
- Knowledge of computer operations system like Windows XP and Windows - 2000/ MAC OS X, desktop applications like MS Office, Open Office, Email client, Adobe Products
- Troubleshooting skills, Interpersonal skills, Communication Skills
- Knowledge in network

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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Send your application letter and comprehensive resumé to:
THE HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc.
Chino Roces Ave. (formerly) Pasong Tamo cor. Yague and Mascardo Sts.
Makati City
E-mail: recruitment@inquirer.com.ph

Marketing Officer Training Specialist

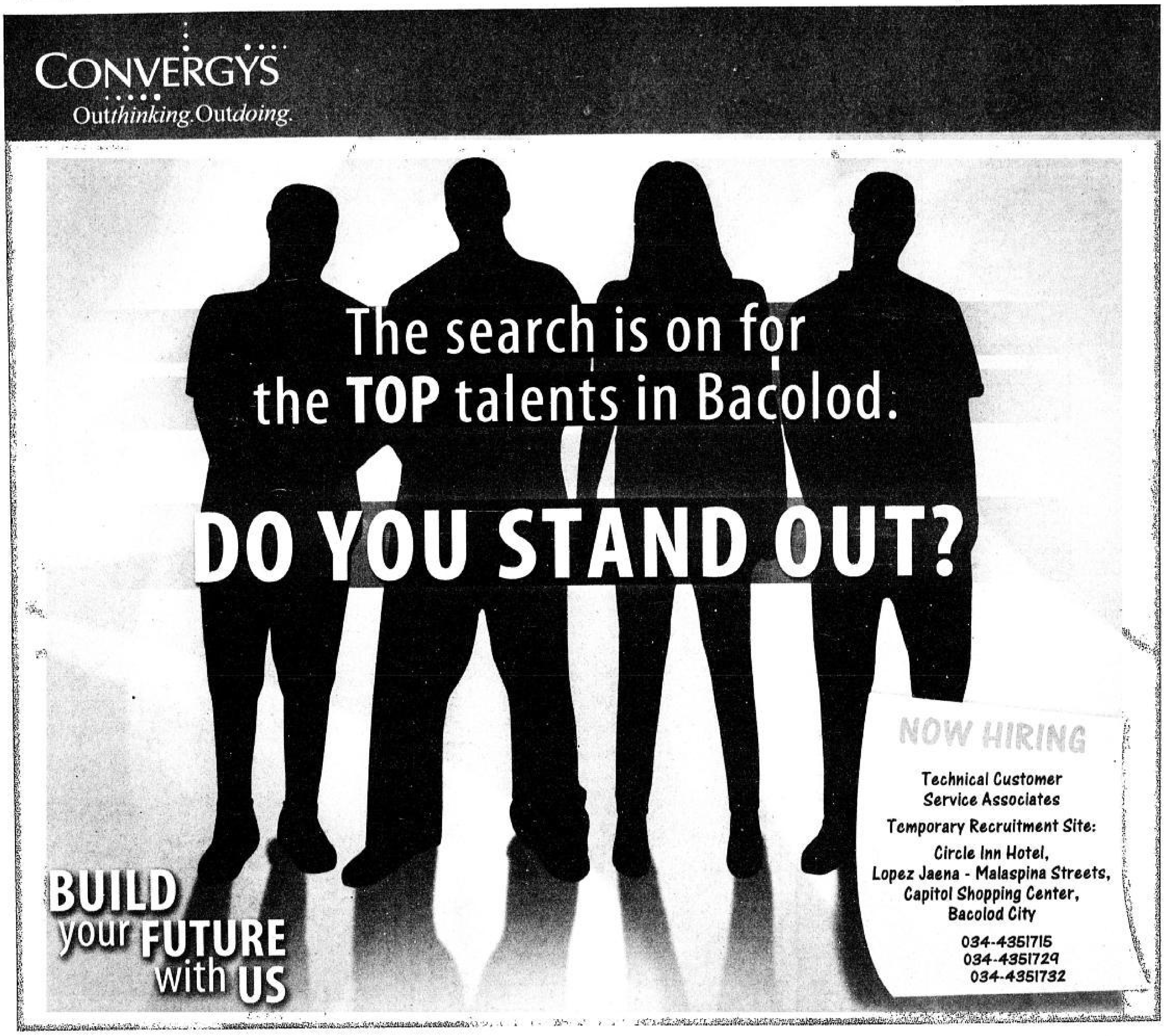
The European IT Service Center Foundation, Inc. is looking for a marketing officer to assist implement its human capability building activities.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

Bachelor's Degree with major in Marketing, Business Administration or related course; at least 2 years experience in sales and marketing of training programs; exposure to information technology/BPO is a plus; capacity to develop cohesive and effective marketing plans; highly-motivated, detail-oriented, and able to make decisions, solve problems, and respond to inquiries with limited supervision; possesses excellent communication skills.

Email applications to sabado@eitsc.com or send your resume to **European IT Service Center, 19/F, Phil. AXA Life Centre, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Cor. Tindalo St., Makati City, Metro Manila** or call Ria/Dom at **[t] +63 2 845-1324; 759-6680.** Please state your current and expected salary.

For immediate employment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034-4351715
034-4351729
034-4351732

Assistant to the Administrative Tribunal

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is looking for a suitably qualified lawyer with experience in labor law to assist the ADB Administrative Tribunal at ADB headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

The Administrative Tribunal is an independent body that considers and passes judgment on any cases of alleged non-observance of the terms and conditions of employment between a staff member and ADB.

The Assistant to the Administrative Tribunal will provide support to the Tribunal by: (i) establishing a database of cases and writing summaries, (ii) preparing briefs and researching memoranda for the judges, and (iii) assisting in editing and publishing Tribunal reports. The position is part-time on an intermittent basis, and the number of hours will depend on the workload. The selected candidate will be offered an initial one-year contract.

Apply electronically to OSEC@adb.org. quoting Ref. no. EXT-ADBT07-002-ADBT by 31 December 2007.

Women are actively encouraged to apply.

Applicants must be nationals of one of the ADB's member countries. Due to the expected large number of applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Applications lacking the job reference number and job title or using the wrong e-mail address will not be considered. ADB will not accept telephone or e-mail inquiries.

www.adb.org Asian Development Bank ADB

NCO GROUP
in cooperation with
Congressman Roman T. Romulo

NCO GROUP DONATES SCHOOL LOCKERS TO RIZAL HIGH SCHOOL

NCO GROUP, an industry leader in Business Process Outsourcing in cooperation with Congressman Roman T. Romulo donates 360 lockers to Rizal High School (RHS) recently. The turnover ceremonies were held at RHS Campus located at Dr. Sixto Antonio Avenue, Caniogan, Pasig City. The said school is mentioned by the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest high school in the world since 1993. Today, it has a student population of more than 25,000. This is one of the many CSR projects that NCO Group has embarked to support education in the communities where it serves. Shown are: Anna Cuvin - King, NCO Group Recruitment Marketing and Sourcing Manager; Lawyer Anthony Bengzon, Chief of Staff - Congressman Roman T. Romulo; Josephine Cruz, RHS Principal; Gary Maxell, NCO Group Site Business Manager; Arlyn Fausto, NCO Group Recruitment Director and Christnell Olimberio, NCO Group Recruitment Marketing and Sourcing Specialist.

SIMBANG GABI NA!
ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Junior INQUIRER

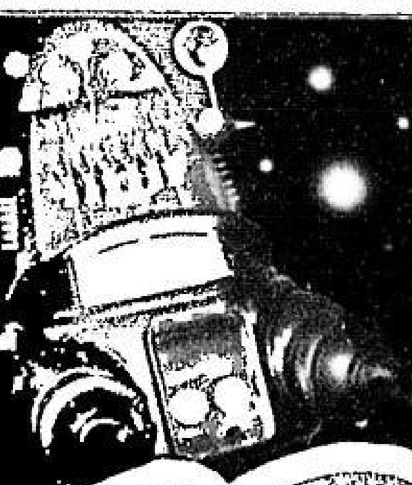
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2007 ✦ 8 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 10, NUMBER 90

E-mail: ji@inquirer.com.ph

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Come out, come out, little one! The new eagle bred and hatched in captivity is here!

Page 4



To infinity and beyond

By Ruth L. Navarra

DO YOU KNOW YOUR maximum level of gross tolerance?

If ever you're in the mood to find out, visit the "Yu Stink" booth at the Grossology Exhibit of the SM Science Discovery Center (SDC). There, the scent of different types of bacteria will give you clues on how the different parts of your body smell—your mouth, armpits, feet, and even your anus.

"I only smelled one thing in 'Yu Stink' because I couldn't stand it," says Benj Pangilinan, 6.

If like Benj, getting grossed out is not your style, don't fret. There's still so much to see in this newest attraction at the SM Mall of Asia.

There's Mr. T, a sassy cartoon fish that talks to guests at the Virtual Reef. He would talk about the local marine life, but he could also suddenly ask your name and the state of your report card. The trick here is to distract him by asking about Nemo and the clown fish, and maybe he won't quiz you about your personal life.

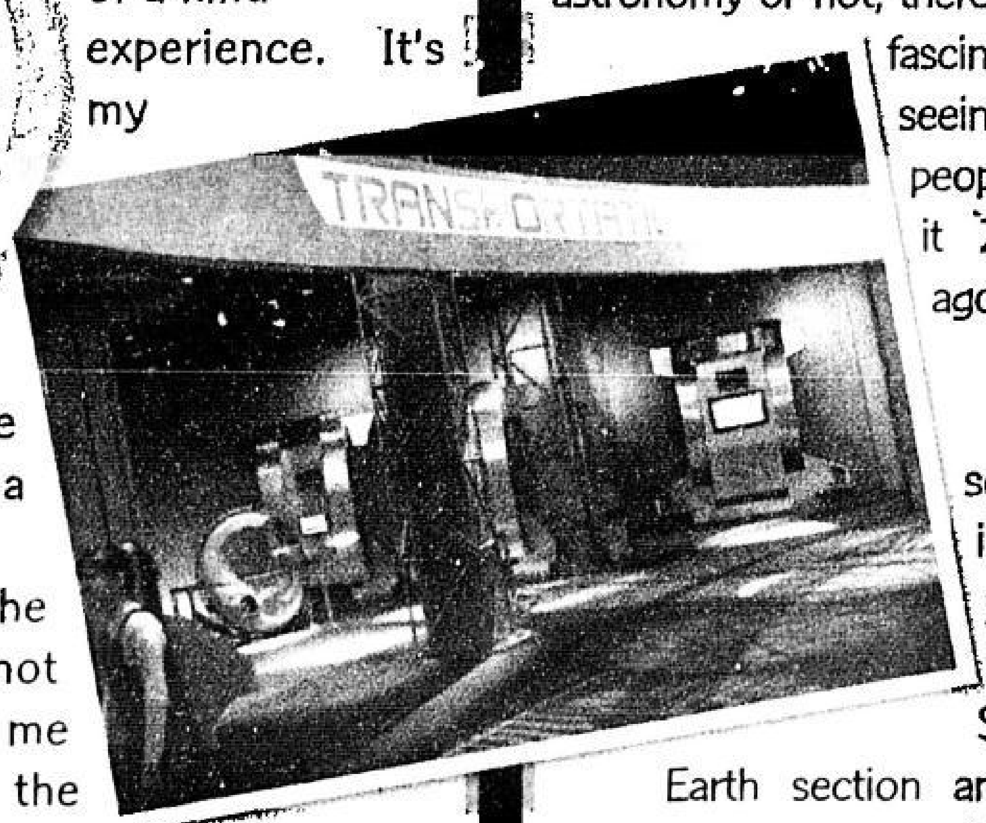
When you pass by Media City, don't stay too long in the area with the latest computer games. You can play those games at home. Instead, show off your slick basketball and volleyball moves on television, and go against a virtual opponent at the Gesture Xtreme.

A PLANETARIUM IS A THEATER-LIKE STRUCTURE THAT FEATURES SHOWS ABOUT ASTRONOMY.

There's also an aisle dedicated to famous robots, both real and fictional. If you get tired of the history lesson, challenge yourself by programming a robot to follow your commands at the Lego Mindstorms Robotic Center. A lesson in robotics is conducted every few minutes or so.

But the crowning jewel of SDC is probably its planetarium. It's the sleekest, most advanced planetarium in our country.

"It was a one-of-a-kind experience. It's my first time to watch a movie where the screen is not in front of me but on the ceiling," says Ella Pangilinan, 11, after watching the "Mystery of the Christmas Star."



The "Mystery" explores the celestial phenomenon that the three wise men saw on Christmas Day. Do you think Christmas is really on December 25? All these years, could we possibly be celebrating the birthday of Jesus on the wrong date? The answer is in the stars.

Whether you're a fan of astronomy or not, there's something fascinating about seeing the sky as people have seen it 2,000 years ago.

NO MATTER WHAT THEY SAY, THE BEST SEAT INSIDE THE DOME IS AT THE BACK.

And, after seeing the sky in the past, you can head to the Spaceship Earth section and write an e-mail to yourself and friends. Don't forget to take a picture. Choose a date when you want them to receive it. It can be the next day or waaaay into the future.

With so many things to do and see, we suggest you spend an entire afternoon exploring the world of science!

PHOTOS BY EUGENE ARANETA

Think Out Loud!

I know it's Christmas when...

I see many *parol* lighting up houses. —**Joseph Andrew D. Urian**, 12, Meycauayan, Bulacan

You wake up to a cold morning and you hear carolers at night.—**Zach Alfonso G. Zuñiga**, 11, Meycauayan, Bulacan

I see Christmas trees and hear Christmas songs in the mall. —**Aina Marie S. Reyes**, 12, Meycauayan, Bulacan

When other kids become more appreciative of you, and you start making amends with people you fought with before. —**Christopher Alec M. Soriano**, 11, Meycauayan, Bulacan

I see children singing carols.—**Shane Norrice C. Brucal**, 12, Bacoor, Cavite

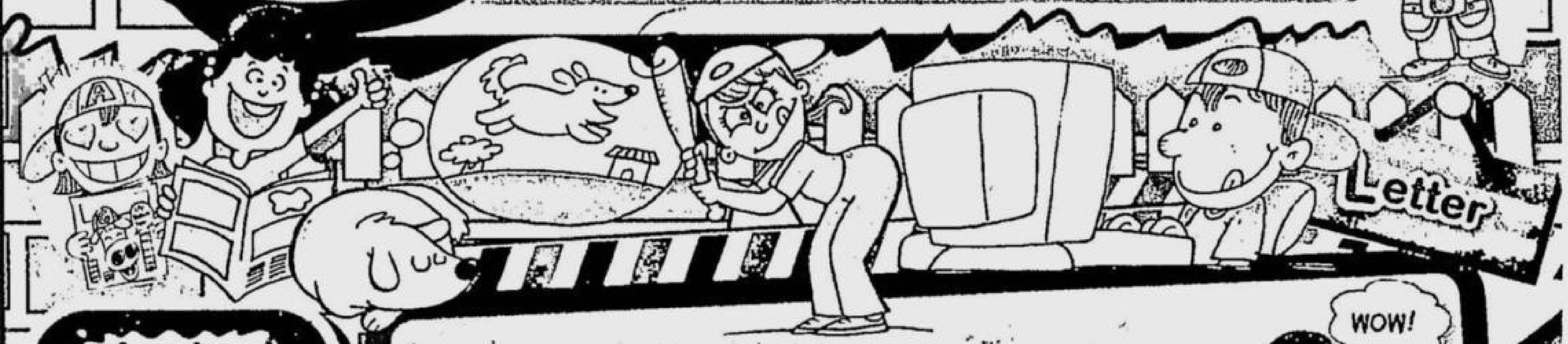
The houses are all lit up, and the malls are crowded with people buying gifts.—**Noelyn Patrisse R. Villanueva**, 11, Bacoor, Cavite

Guyito's Corral

Welcome to my corral!

This is your own special space, where you can express your thoughts and feelings bout anything under the sun in the form of essays, poems, letters and even illustrations!

Send all contributions to ji@inquirer.com.ph. Don't forget to indicate your full name, age and the city where you live. We'll be waiting!



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Telephone number: 897-8808 loc. 340 (Editorial) and 534 (Sales).
Snail mail: P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines.

2003 Best Children's Newspaper Awardee Hall of Fame

ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Hey JJ!

I read your article about Cartoon Network's "Awards of Excellence 2007" and it made me really happy. I'm glad that Cartoon Network gave young Filipinos a chance to showcase their talents.

Aside from being talented, I realized that Filipinos are also very persevering. Even though the winners encountered many obstacles such as losing their voice or getting injured, their hard work and determination helped them overcome those hindrances, and brought them to the top!

I learned that we should be like those winners and never give up, no matter the hardships. I also learned that we should be proud of the talents that God blessed us with and not be shy when it comes to showing them. We should all realize that we are very lucky to receive God's special gift: talents.

—Monica Bengzon
11 years old
Makati City

What an insightful letter, Monica! We hope you keep reading JJ, and maybe write something for our Journal section.

—JJ Staff

YOU WIN!

Is there any way for superstylin' girls to get fashion forward advice for the future? Totally! Ask this funky fortune-teller questions about school, boys, fashion or fun and you'll get some answers. Bratz Magic Ball is distributed by Ban Kee Trading.

Bratz My MAGIC Bratz Ball
B

Out There

BARNEY AND FRIENDS! Everyone's favorite purple dinosaur is back! Play with Barney and his prehistoric posse this Christmas break with "Let's Imagine Live!—The Philippine Tour". Catch Barney, Baby Bop, BJ and Riff at the Araneta Coliseum on December 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23. "Let's Imagine Live!—The Philippine Tour" is brought to us by Hit Entertainment and Millenium Entertainment, Inc. For tickets inquiries, call Ticket-Net at 911-5555.

* * *

HI-YAAAH! The Japan Foundation, Manila (JFM), Market! Market!, and the Ayala Malls invite you to the 2007 International Karate Exhibition by the Kyokushin-Kan on Dec. 18, Tuesday, 6 to 7 p.m. at the Market! Market! Activity Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. Admission is free. Kyokushin-Kan is Japan's most renowned and most widespread style of karate. For more information, call 0917-514-3761 or visit their office at Kyokushin-Kan Karate-do Philippines, #7 UPY Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue cor. Marconi Street, Makati City.

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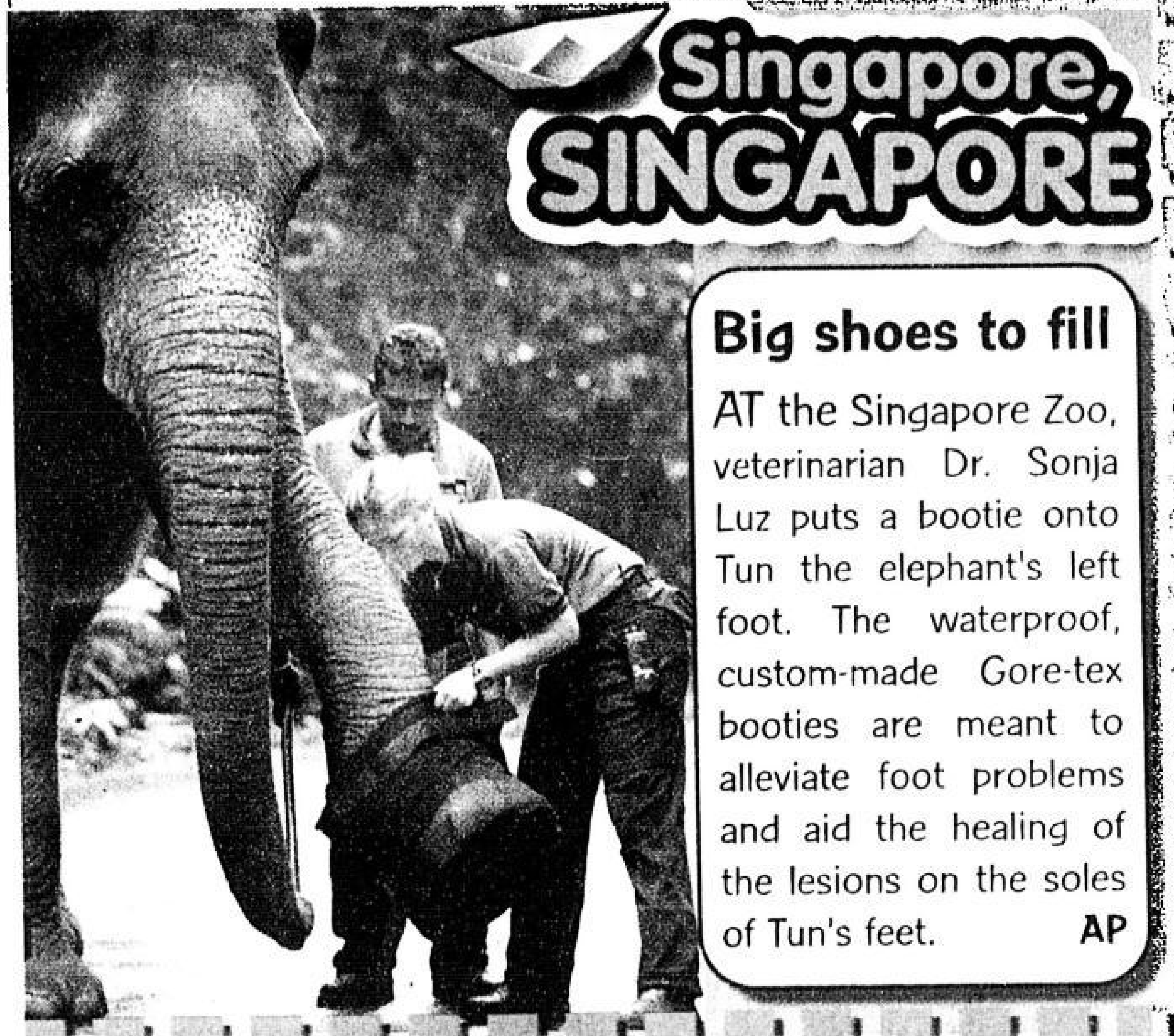

Big shoes to fill

AT the Singapore Zoo, veterinarian Dr. Sonja Luz puts a bootie onto Tun the elephant's left foot. The waterproof, custom-made Gore-tex booties are meant to alleviate foot problems and aid the healing of the lesions on the soles of Tun's feet. **AP**

THE CITY OF MANILA
Tender Juicy
The Christmas Family Festival
KrisMaskoT 2007
PAGCOR
Sunday, December 16, 2007
Roxas Boulevard, Manila
MEDIA PARTNERS
MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER
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Inquirer
D&L PRINTEX COLOR CORPORATION
Chow king
MEGA SARDINES
MERALCO
TARA NA SA PARADA!
Libre
Pamaskong Handog 8am-10pm
TOPMARKSE

Warsaw, POLAND

No names?

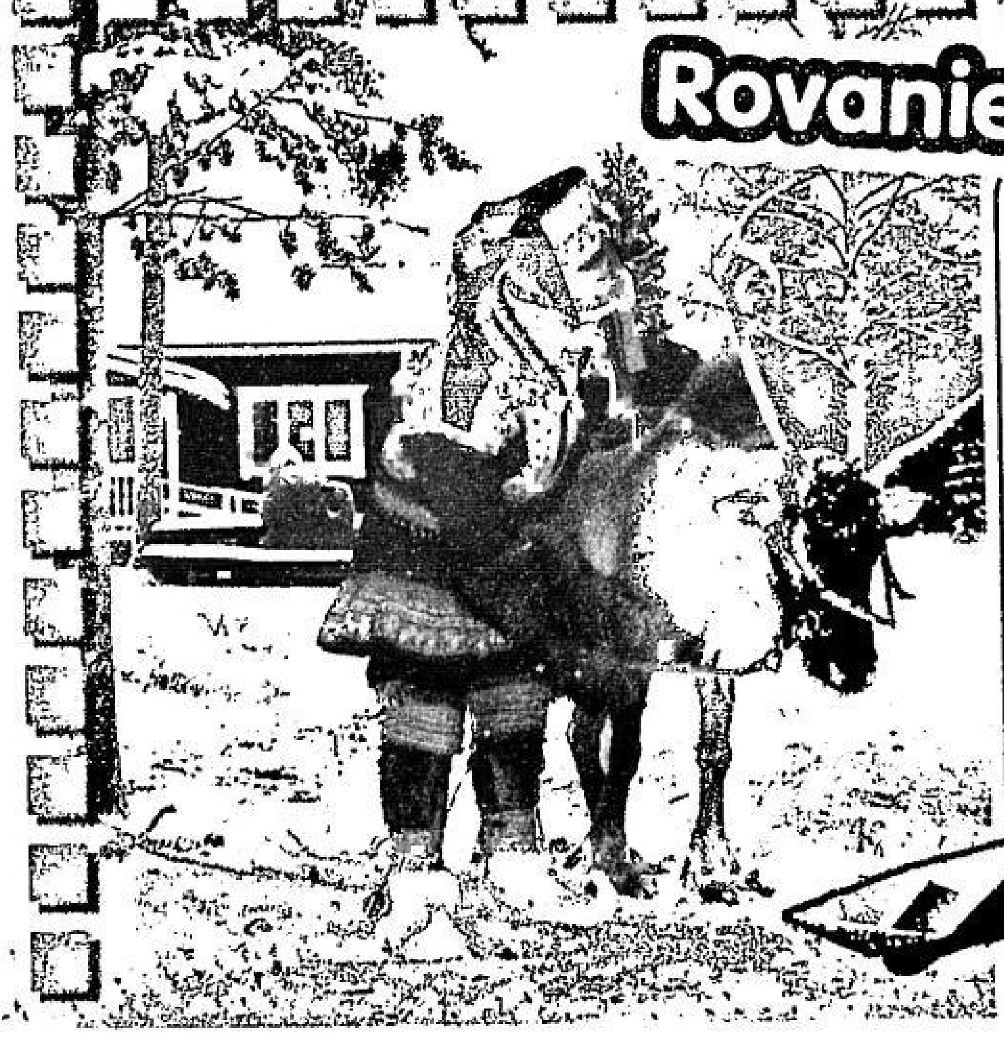
THESE moss-covered grave stones at a Jewish cemetery in Warsaw pose a challenge to cemetery director Przemyslaw Isroel Szpilman. He is taking on the huge task of reconstructing the cemetery's records of its estimated 250,000 graves. **AP**

Davao, PHILIPPINES

Come out, come out!

THIS chick of Philippine Eagles Tsai and Princess Maasim made no effort to come out of its shell on its due time. Experts at the Philippine Eagle Center were forced to pip the shell themselves to save the chick from suffocation. The chick is the 22nd eagle bred and hatched in captivity by the Philippine Eagle Foundation as part of the breeding and conservation program of the critically endangered species. **AFP**

Rovaniemi, FINLAND



Bad news for Santa

HERE'S an addition to the long list of reasons why we should be alarmed about global warming. Sami Ruismaeki, one of Finland's 7,000 reindeer herders says that this animal's survival is being threatened. He explains, "when it doesn't rain, there are no mushrooms and the reindeer aren't able to build up their body fat before the long winter." **AFP**

RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL-UP GAMES

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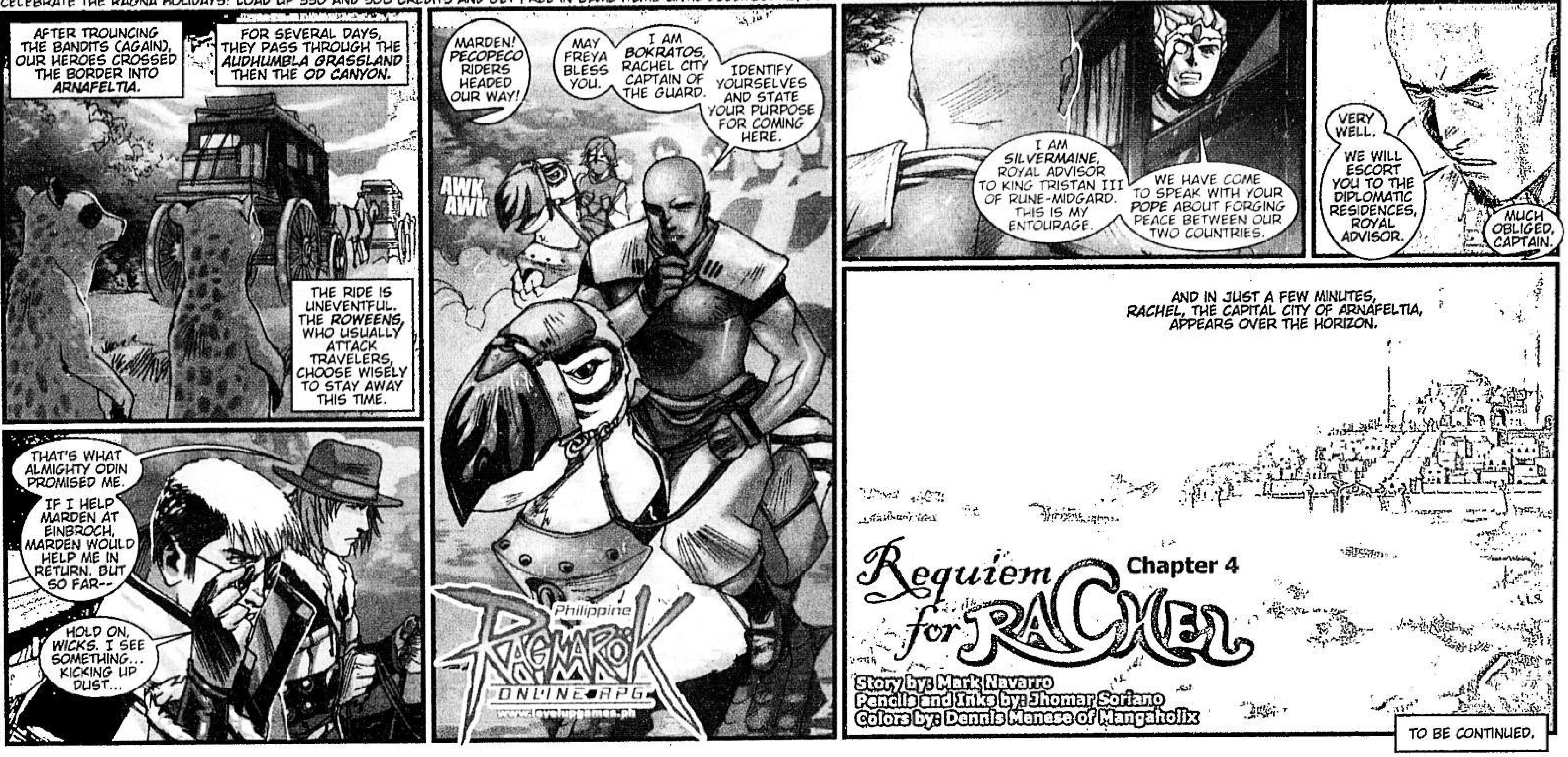
AFTER TROUNCING THE BANDITS (AGAIN), OUR HEROES CROSSED THE BORDER INTO *ARNAFELTIA.*
FOR SEVERAL DAYS, THEY PASS THROUGH THE *AUDHUMBLA GRASSLAND* THEN THE *OD CANYON.*
THE RIDE IS UNEVENTFUL. THE *ROWEENS,* WHO USUALLY ATTACK TRAVELERS, CHOOSE WISELY TO STAY AWAY THIS TIME.
THAT'S WHAT ALMIGHTY ODIN PROMISED ME.
IF I HELP MARDEN AT EINBROCH, MARDEN WOULD HELP ME IN RETURN. BUT SO FAR--
HOLD ON, WICKS. I SEE SOMETHING... KICKING UP DUST...
MARDEN! PECOPECO RIDERS HEADED OUR WAY!
AWK AWK
MAY FREYA BLESS YOU.
I AM *BOKRATOS,* RACHEL CITY CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.
IDENTIFY YOURSELVES AND STATE YOUR PURPOSE FOR COMING HERE.
Philippine RAGNAROK ONLINE RPG
www.levelupgames.ph
I AM *SILVERMAINE,* ROYAL ADVISOR TO KING TRISTAN III OF RUNE-MIDGARD. THIS IS MY ENTOURAGE.
WE HAVE COME TO SPEAK WITH YOUR *POPE* ABOUT FORGING PEACE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.
VERY WELL.
WE WILL ESCORT YOU TO THE DIPLOMATIC RESIDENCES, ROYAL ADVISOR.
MUCH OBLIGED, CAPTAIN.
AND IN JUST A FEW MINUTES, *RACHEL,* THE CAPITAL CITY OF ARNAFELTIA, APPEARS OVER THE HORIZON.
Requiem for RACHEL
Chapter 4
TO BE CONTINUED.

Story by: Mark Navarro
Pencils and Inks by: Jhomar Soriano
Colors by: Dennis Menese of Mangaholix

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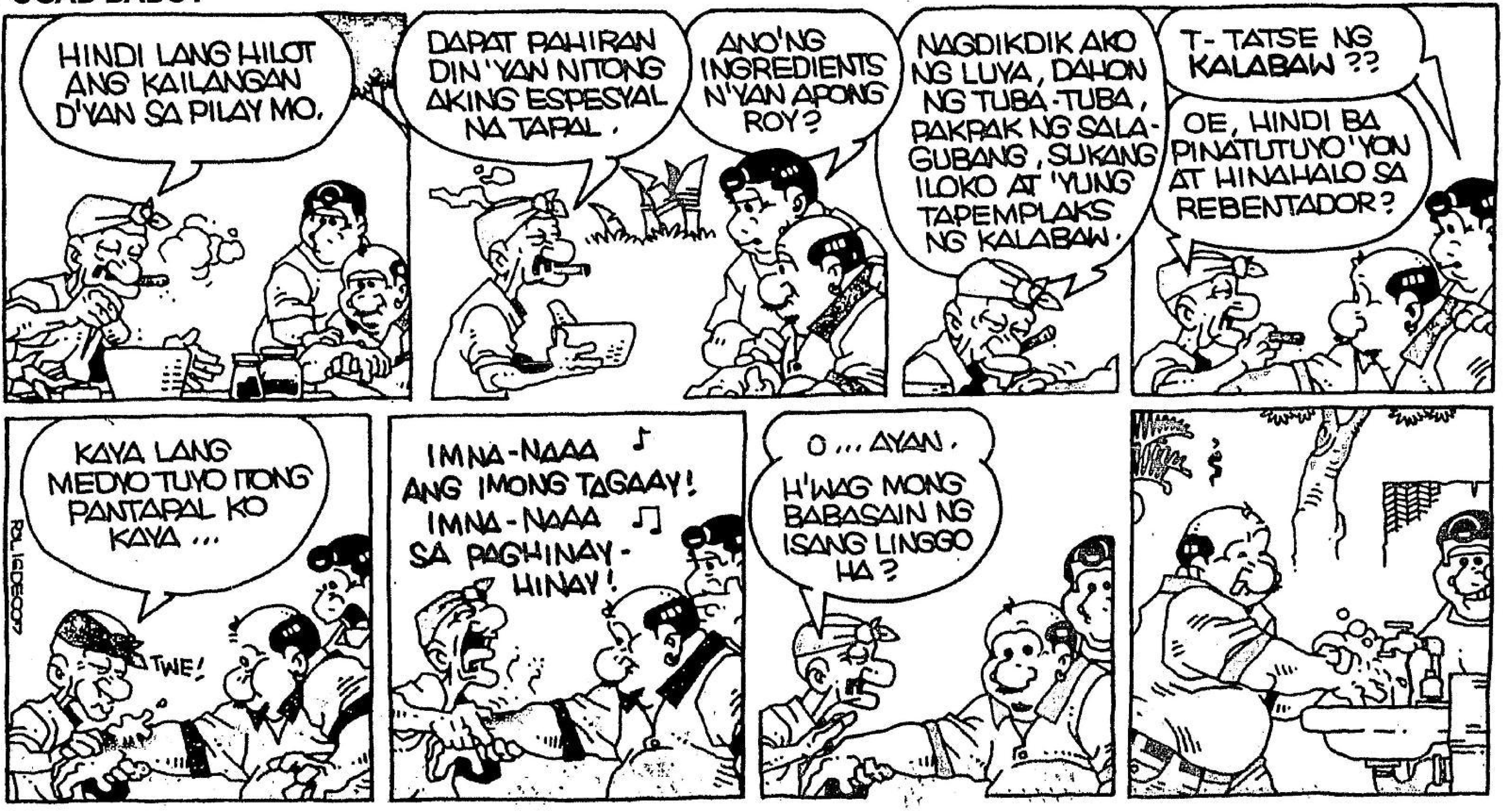
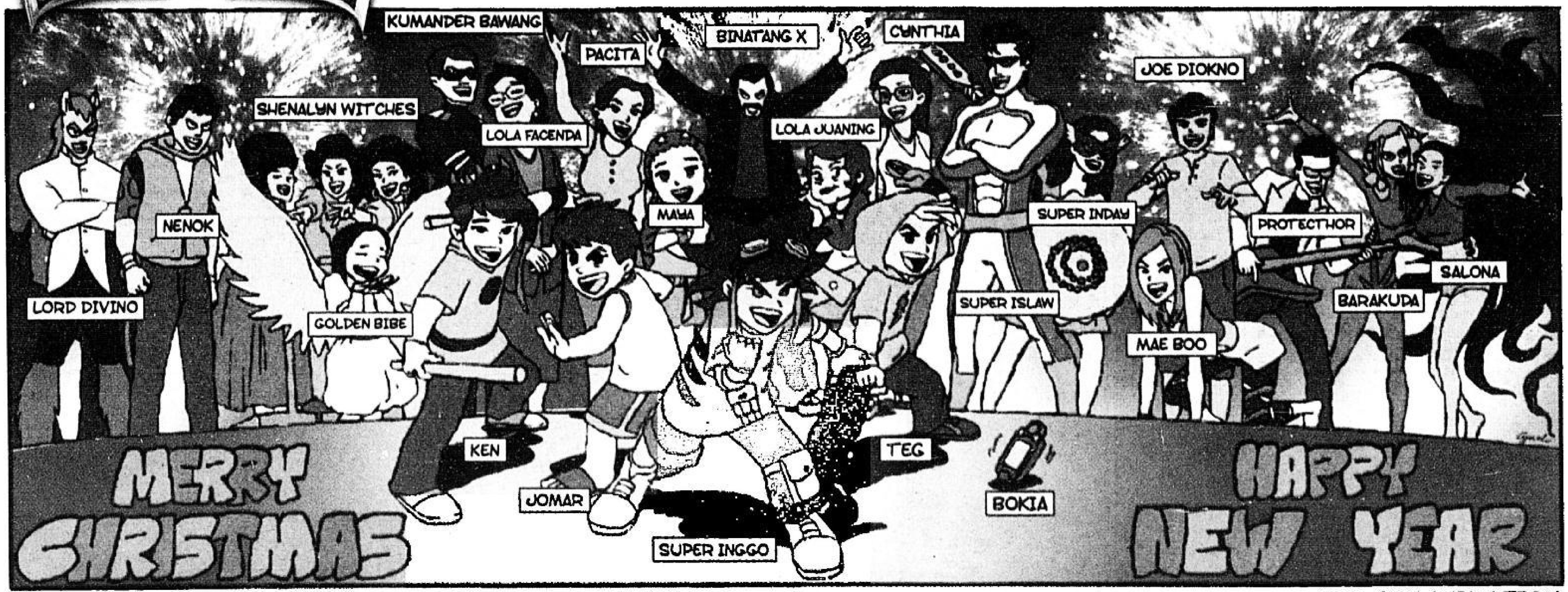
PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.


HINDI LANG HILOT ANG KAILANGAN D'YAN SA PILAY MO.
DAPAT PAHIRAN DIN 'YAN NITONG AKING ESPESYAL NA TAPAL.
ANO'NG INGREDIENTS N'YAN APONG ROY?
NAGDIKDIK AKO NG LUYA, DAHON NG TUBA-TUBA, PAKPAK NG SALAGUBANG, SUKANG ILOKO AT 'YUNG TAPEMPLAKS NG KALABAW.
T- TATSE NG KALABAW ??
OE, HINDI BA PINATUTUYO 'YON AT HINAHALO SA REBENTADOR?
KAYA LANG MEDYO TUYO ITONG PANTAPAL KO KAYA ...
TWE!
POL 16DEC07
IMNA-NAAA ♪ ANG IMONG TAGAAY!
IMNA-NAAA ♫ SA PAGHINAY-HINAY!
O ... AYAN.
H'WAG MONG BABASAIN NG ISANG LINGGO HA?

SUPER INGGO

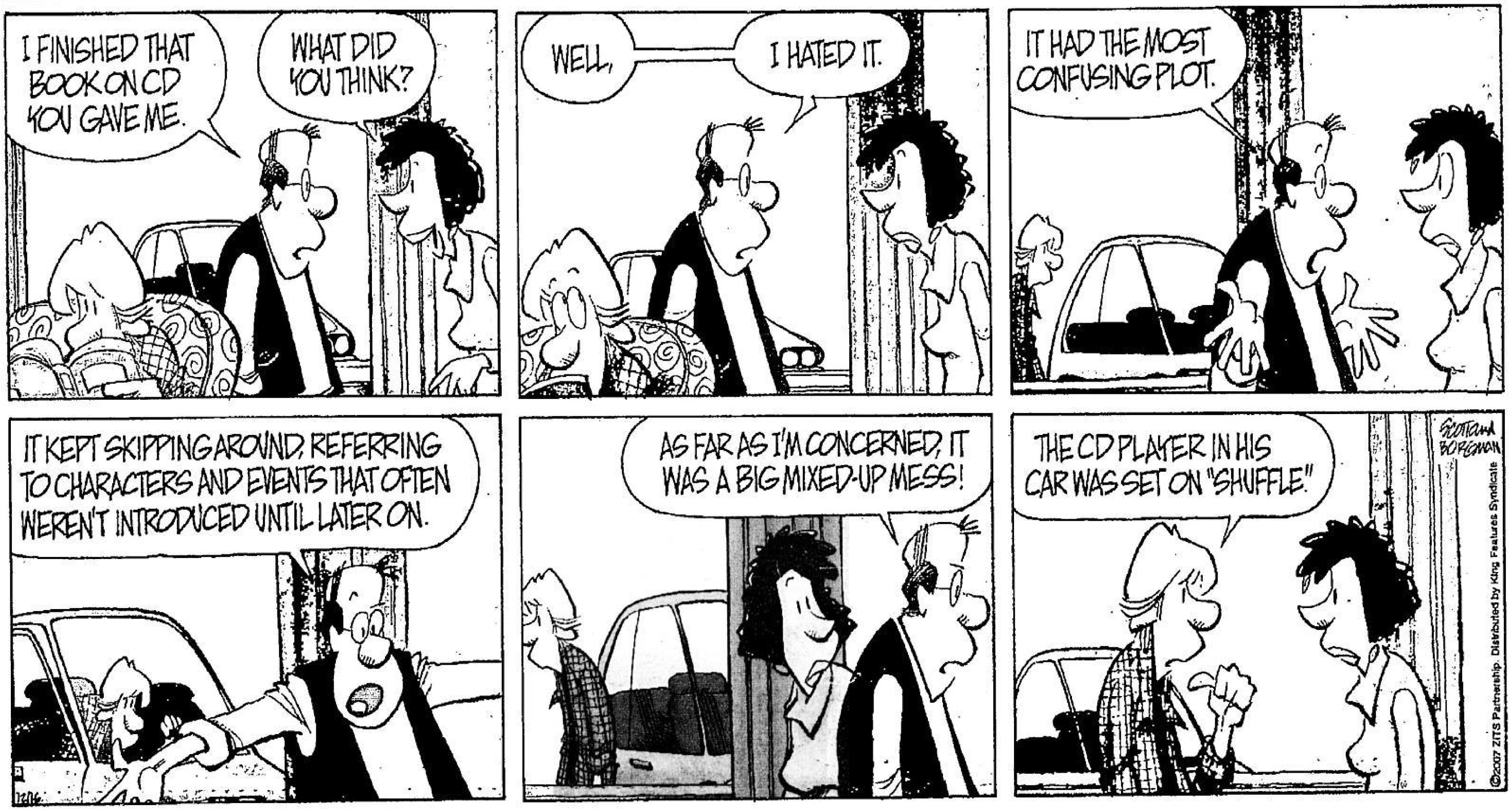
SINO SA KANILA ANG GUSTO MONG MAKITA SA BOOK 2? TEXT REACT INGGO <ANSWER, NAME> TO 2366 FOR GLOBE, TM, SUN CELLULAR OR 231 FOR SMART, TALK N TEXT


KUMANDER BAWANG
PACITA
BINATANG X
CYNTHIA
JOE DIOKNO
SHENALYN WITCHES
LOLA FACENDA
LOLA JUANING
NENOK
MAYA
SUPER INDAY
PROTECTHOR
SALONA
LORD DIVINO
GOLDEN BIBE
SUPER ISLAW
BARAKUDA
MAE BOO
KEN
TEG
JOMAR
BOKIA
SUPER INGGO
MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY NEW YEAR

EXEC-IN-CHARGE OF PRODUCTION: ENRICO SANTOS
PRODUCTION MANAGER: RAYMUND DIZON
EXEC. PRODUCER: FERRY TRINIDAD
ILLUSTRATOR: MARVIN SANTANA
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS: OTHEL SALINAS
RANDY MESSADA
CHARRISE AVILA
ABS-CBN ANIMATION

ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN


I FINISHED THAT BOOK ON CD YOU GAVE ME.
WHAT DID YOU THINK?
WELL,
I HATED IT.
IT HAD THE MOST CONFUSING PLOT.
IT KEPT SKIPPING AROUND, REFERRING TO CHARACTERS AND EVENTS THAT OFTEN WEREN'T INTRODUCED UNTIL LATER ON.
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT WAS A BIG MIXED-UP MESS!
THE CD PLAYER IN HIS CAR WAS SET ON "SHUFFLE."
SCOTT and BORGMAN
12/16
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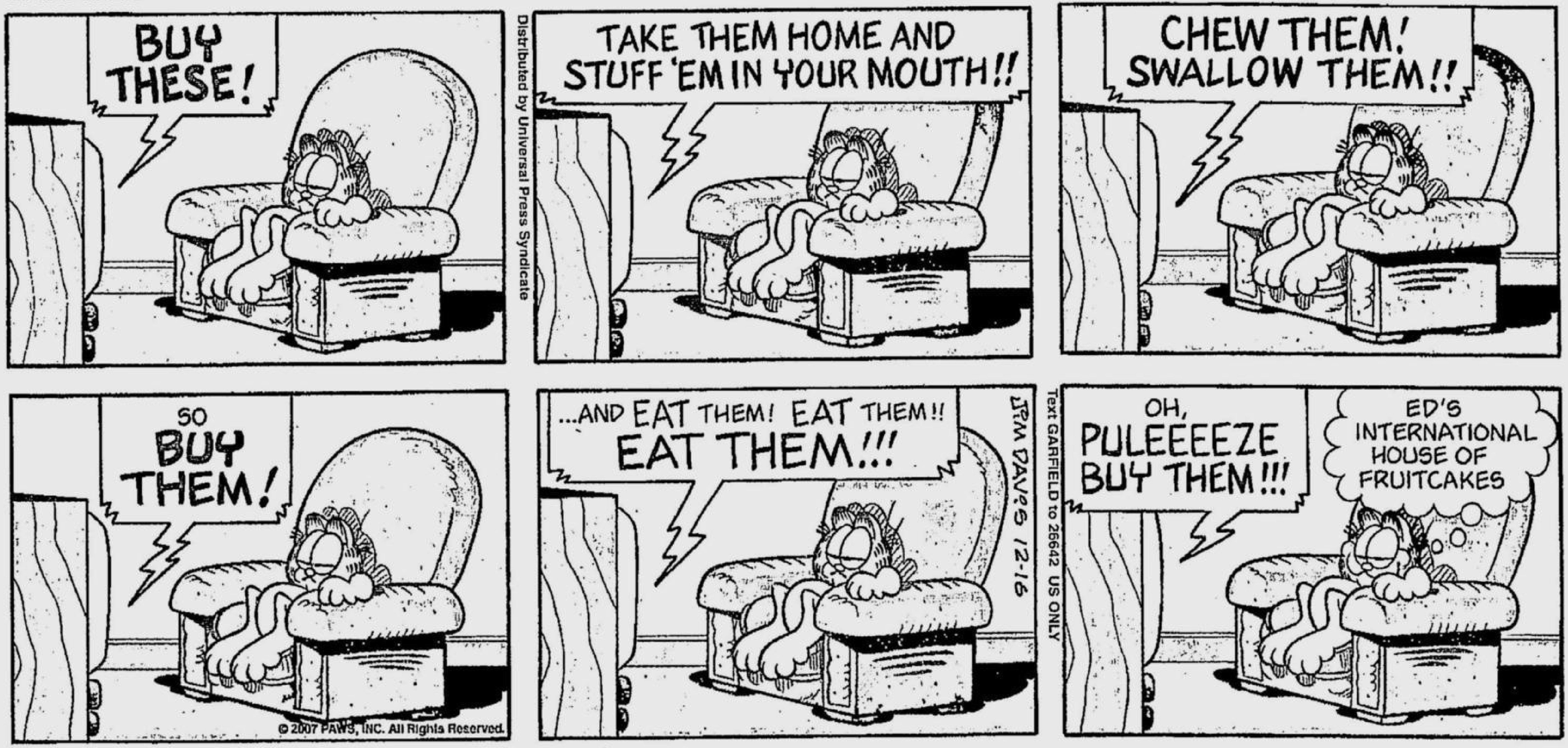
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


BUY THESE!
TAKE THEM HOME AND STUFF 'EM IN YOUR MOUTH!!
CHEW THEM! SWALLOW THEM!!
SO BUY THEM!
...AND EAT THEM! EAT THEM!! EAT THEM!!!
OH, PULEEEEZE BUY THEM!!!
ED'S INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF FRUITCAKES
JIM DAVIS 12-16

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Text GARFIELD to 26642 US ONLY

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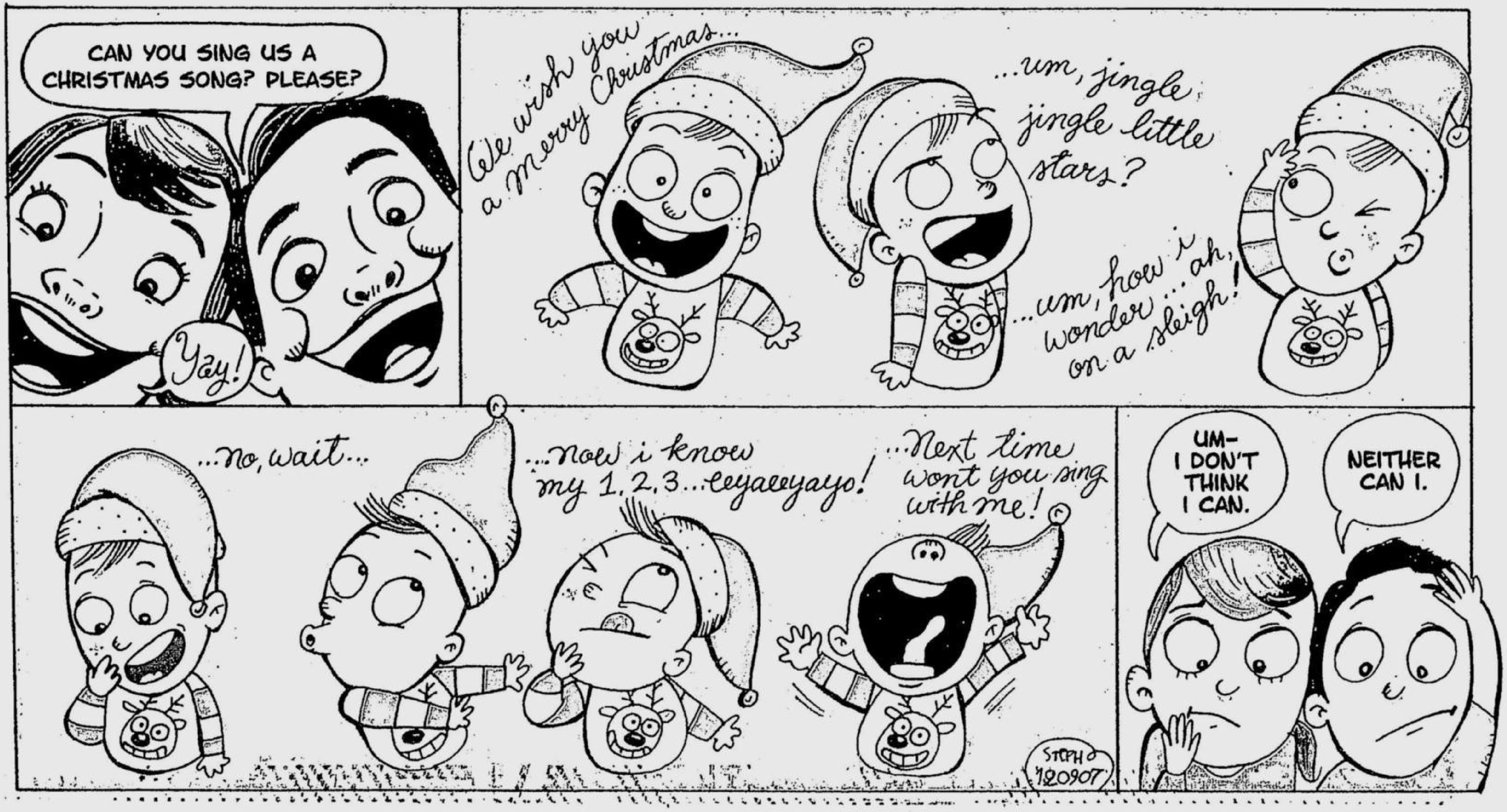
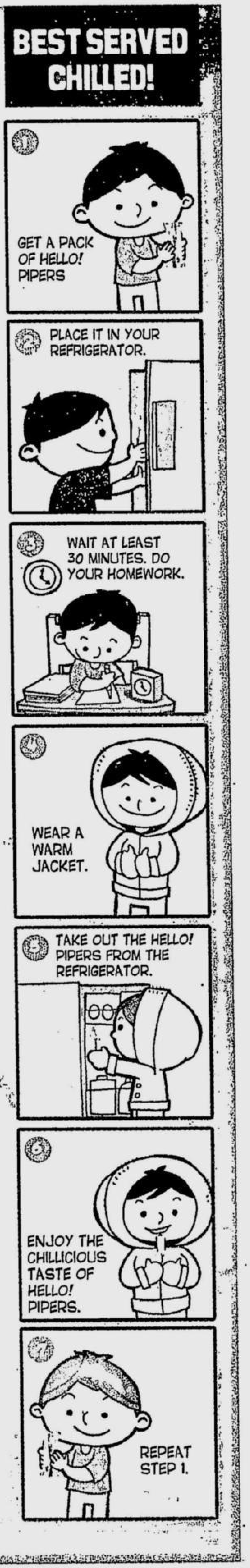
FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO


CAN YOU SING US A CHRISTMAS SONG? PLEASE?
Yay!
We wish you a merry Christmas...
...um, jingle jingle little stars?
...um, how i wonder... ah, on a sleigh!
...no, wait...
...now i know my 1, 2, 3... eeyaeeyayo!
...Next time wont you sing with me!
STEPH 120907
UM- I DON'T THINK I CAN.
NEITHER CAN I.

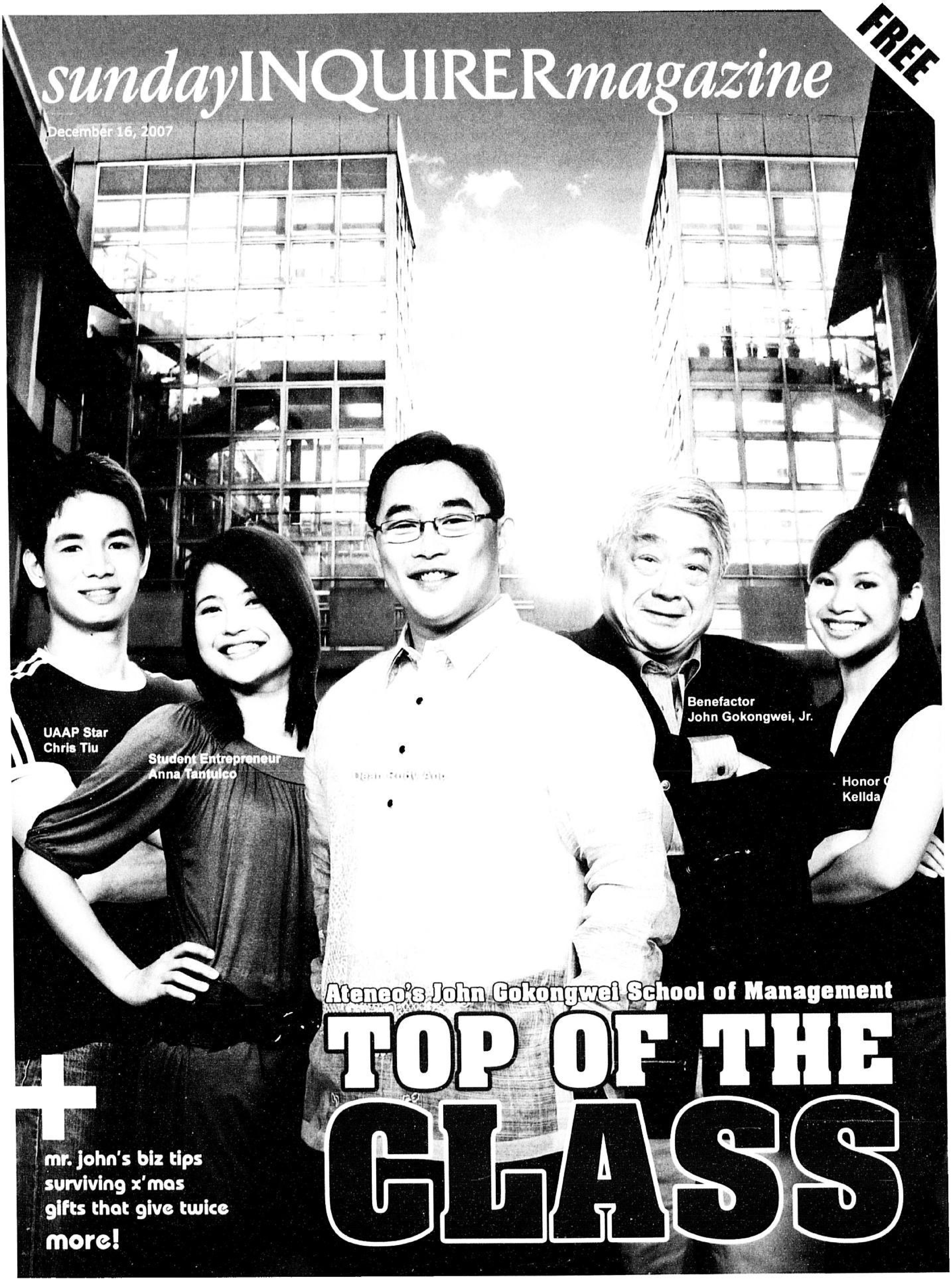
CHILL KA LANG WITH
JACK'n JILL
HELLO! P!PERS
ANG ICE CREAM FLAVOR NA NASA WAFER STICK!
JACK'n JILL
HELLO! P!PERS
2 sticks
COOKIES & CREAM
Wafer Pipes
Crunchy Wafer Pipes with rich ice cream flavored filling
2 sticks
JACK'n JILL
HELLO! P!PERS
CLASSIC CHOCOLATE
Wafer Pipes
Net Wt. 0.26 oz. (7.5g)
Crunchy Wafer Pipes with rich ice cream flavored filling
HELLO! LANG NANG HELLO!


BEST SERVED CHILLED!
GET A PACK OF HELLO! PIPERS
PLACE IT IN YOUR REFRIGERATOR.
WAIT AT LEAST 30 MINUTES. DO YOUR HOMEWORK.
WEAR A WARM JACKET.
TAKE OUT THE HELLO! PIPERS FROM THE REFRIGERATOR.
ENJOY THE CHILLICIOUS TASTE OF HELLO! PIPERS.
REPEAT STEP 1.

*sunday*INQUIRER*magazine*

December 16, 2007

FREE


UAAP Star
Chris Tiu
Student Entrepreneur
Anna Tantuico
[illegible]
Benefactor
John Gokongwei, Jr.
Honor C
Kellda

Ateneo's John Gokongwei School of Management

TOP OF THE CLASS

+

mr. john's biz tips

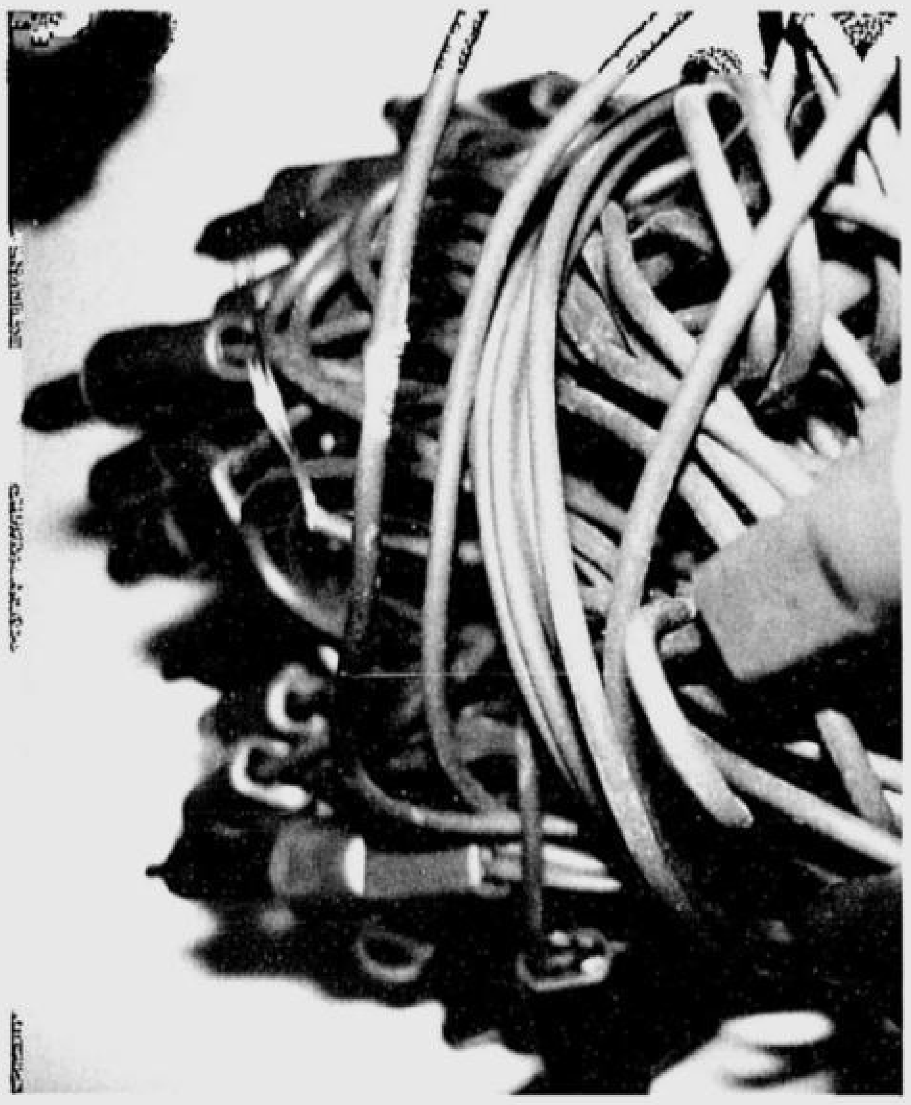
surviving x'mas

gifts that give twice

more!

Lighting Up Safely

10 more ways to add a holiday sparkle to your home without risking a fire



Discard lights which have frayed or exposed wires.

1. **Check for ICC or PS mark.** To avoid the risk of short-circuiting of wires, electrical shocks, and fire hazards, make sure that the product complies with applicable standards for safety and performance. Look for lights with Import Commodity Code (ICC) and Philippine Standard (PS) certification marks on each label.

2. **Inspect and correct.** Inspect your Christmas light strings each year before use. Discard sets that show excessive wear like frayed cords, insulation gaps, cracked bulbs, or loose connections.

3. **Do not use indoor lights for outdoor use.** Read manufacturer's instructions to ensure the proper use of lights.

4. **Lights unplugged.** Make sure to unplug light strings before replacing bulbs, and double check to ensure replacement bulbs match the voltage and wattage of the burned out bulb.

5. **One bulb does not fit all.** Ensure that bulb reflectors are the right size for the light string.

6. **Keep lights thumbtack- and staple-free.** Never tack or staple directly through the wire. Use plastic holders instead.

7. **Do not overload electrical outlets.** Do not plug more than three lights sets at a time. Do not coil or bunch extension cords. Avoid running extension cords under the carpets and across walkways, where people can walk over them. This can cause overheating and break the wiring, and become possible fire hazards.

8. **Childproof your home.** Keep children away from all electrical connections. Cover electrical outlets within their reach.

9. **Do not leave lights unattended.** Always turn off Christmas lights when you leave the house unattended—after business hours, or before going to bed.

10. **Pack it up.** After the holidays, try to store lights and decorations in the original packaging to avoid damage to wires and bulbs. •

Tips from Diamond Bright Lights. For more information, please e-mail diamond.bright.lights@gmail.com

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- Fashion Show by Abbylyn
- Cooking Demo featuring MCN Taipan
- Entertainment Numbers/Celebrity Auction by GMA Artists featuring Iwa Moto, Starstruck Batch 3, Bea Binene, Katrina Halili, Sheena Halili, Chynna Ortaleza, LJ Reyes, Jen Rosendahl, Pinoy Pop Superstar (Jonalyn, Brenan, Aicelle, Gerald, Maricris & Bryan), Rhian Ramos, Joy Velasco, Ella Guevarra, Jana Victoria, and John Nite

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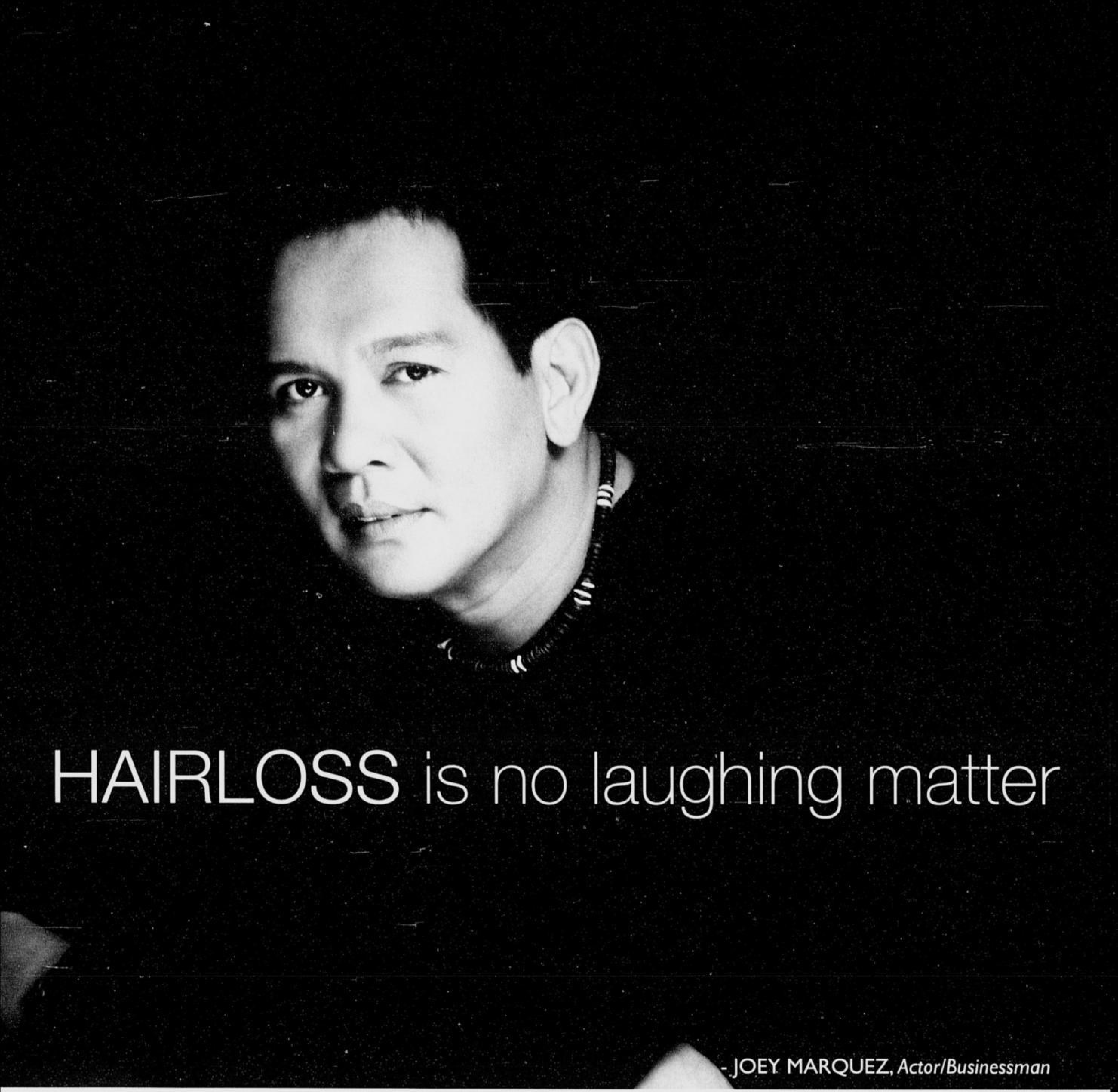
HAIRLOSS is no laughing matter
- JOEY MARQUEZ, *Actor/Businessman*

"I've been a comedian for a long time, I'm used to being the butt of jokes. But I can still be touchy about my appearance. When I started experiencing hairloss, people made jokes about it. I was even called Monsignor because my bald spot was increasing to the size of a Monsignor's cap! I tried to not let it bother me but the truth was, it did. *Siyempre* with less hair you look older. And I'd rather be seen as classic, not old. I tried special shampoos and topical injections *sa* States but with no success. Then I went to Svenson. After three weeks I saw a big difference. Now, when people ask me, 'Is it a wig? A transplant?' I say, 'No, it's my real natural hair! It's Svenson.'"

Svenson
INTERNATIONAL
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Menu

By Margaux Salcedo

I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas

There is nobility in the lowly carabao, whose milk has provided dairy farmers a living and our tables, native cheese

Ricky Arquiza, F&B World

Source of pride: White cheese

If there is anything that can trump my love for chocolate, it would be my love for cheese. In fact, my phantom children are named after cheese: Brie, Cammie (short for Camembert), Rocky (short for Roquefort), and I was thinking of Carrie as a nickname for carabao cheese, but to name a child Carabao just seems too cruel, so I'll just stick with three kids.

Children's names notwithstanding, carabao cheese has always been a favorite. I had a childhood crush on this but truly fell in love in 2003, around the same time I fell in love with native hot chocolate, which I would always pair with this. The slightly sour, slightly salty taste of the cheese against the bitter-sweet blend of pure cocoa was a daily afternoon delight.

I realized its value even more when I visited the home of the old lady who makes this native cheese for us in my mother's province (Bulacan). *Ka* Odiang is in her seventies and is one of the last few ladies around who make this cheese the traditional way. As in most slow foods, the process is not complicated—all you need is carabao milk, a bit of salt, a bit of vinegar, and hot water—but is tedious and requires a lot of patience. I remember one occasion when *Ka* Odiang apologized that she could not make enough cheese because the carabaos no longer produce enough milk.

It hit me that if the carabaos disappear, so will this amazing cheese. I also felt horrible about purchasing such valuable cheese at such a low price, less than P30 for around 100 grams (this is in Bulacan; it goes for around P60 retail in the malls or supermarkets). Brie of the same weight sells at around P100 in Santi's Delicatessen.

Then I heard of the White Revolution. The White Revolution aims to solve problems such as poverty and malnutrition through the increased production of carabao milk. The Revolution finds its inspiration in a law crafted by former actor Joseph Estrada, portrayed as a simpleton by far too many "Erap" jokes, who won as President by the largest margin ever in Philippine election history. The joke is that he was the class dunce of his Senate batch and therefore crafted only one law, and that it was the Carabao Law because he spoke "carabao English" (pidgin English). It was in 1992 when then-President Corazon Aquino signed the Philippine Carabao Act into law.

Fifteen years later, skeptics see the benefits of the law. The Carabao Center in Nueva Ecija, which was created by virtue of the law, is keen on its efforts to increase the population of carabaos in the country. (Carabao population as of 2006 is placed at 3,360,462.*) Danilo Fausto, owner of DVF Dairy Farm, which manufactures and markets the product Gatas ng Kalabaw (Carabao Milk) to leading supermarkets in Metro Manila, says it is the best law ever crafted for the Filipino poor because it directly addresses the needs of Filipino farmers. Through cooperatives created by virtue of the law, dairy farmers become direct beneficiaries of the act, which has resulted in increased income for households that participate in related programs.

The consumers benefit, too, of course. Fausto, in his book "Dare to Dream," which talks about his entrepreneurial journey into dairy farming, enumerates the benefits of carabao milk: higher calcium content, much less cholesterol content, higher protein content, less sodium, and higher content of vitamins A and C.

I want to add another benefit which is less tangible: cheese pride. In Europe, the production of cheese is taken so seriously that regions compete and protect their cheeses. If you meet a certain standard, your cheese may receive the designation of *Appellation d'origine contrôlée* (AOC) or Term of Controlled Origin, a status symbol which simply communicates that the product from this region or area owns a certain standard of quality that is nothing short of excellent. (This tremendously increases the value of cheese, especially those that are for export.) This status has been given to Camembert and Gruyere cheese, to name some of the more familiar cheeses.

But the lengths their natives go to for their cheese! Stories have it that in the village of Gruyeres in Gruyere, Switzerland, a secret society called the Confrerie de Gruyere even has ceremonial rites where members stand before a table with their beloved Gruyere cheese then swear to uphold its honor. "It's a holy mission," says the Confrere's Governor. The mission includes convincing the world that only the Swiss make true Gruyere. (Appparently, the French called cheese from the Franche-Comte province "gruyere" for several centuries as well, hence the debate, which was settled when the Appellation was awarded to the Swiss in 2001.)

I am not saying that we have to be as obsessive about our cheese. But it would be great to communicate our pride in our own white cheese. So the next time you purchase milk or cheese, think of the health benefits of carabao milk; think of the *lolas* (grandmothers) in the cottage industries whom you will indirectly help; think of Guyito (the INQUIRER's carabao mascot) and go for the carabao. •

Gatas ng Kalabaw (Nueva Ecija-based) is available in leading supermarkets in Metro Manila. St. Mary's at the Salcedo Market in Salcedo Village on Saturdays (7 a.m. to 2 p.m.) also offers carabao milk and carabao cheese products. For Bulacan carabao cheese, call 0917-8339539.

**Sources: Philippine Carabao Center (http://www.pcc.da.gov.ph/). War of the Cheeses by Robb Walsh, American Way Magazine (http://www.robbwalsh.com/). Fausto, Dare to Dream*

By Alya B. Honasan

A Holiday Survival Guide

Find yourself dreading this stressful season? Here's an honest, practical guide to keep from turning into a year end wreck

munchiefood.com

Tummy tip: Be discerning at the table

IT'S an unfortunate fact that the amount of stress one goes through this time of year is directly proportional to how long our holiday season lasts—and the Philippines famously has one of the longest Christmas seasons in the world. Read: You'll be tired, impoverished, running late, frazzled, fraught with guilt and an overblown sense of obligation, and generally overfed and unhealthy for quite a bit longer than you should be. Although this season still exhausts me—heck, I'm Pinoy—here are some things I've been doing of late which have truly helped me mark the holidays with a little less stress and a lot more sense of purpose.

1. **Party prudently.** Face it: we can't go to ALL of them and make it to January. In my ripe old age, when it takes me two days to recover from a hangover on the rare occasions when I still do drink, I've learned that I am no longer 21. Or even 42. My rule of thumb has become, choose a maximum of two parties a day, and let the host of the first event know that I'm just dropping by, or I'll never leave—I'd rather be honest than sick. And if I get invites for consecutive days, I decline some of them to schedule a rest day between parties so I can go home early and catch up on sleep. You could also perhaps alternate your choices: if you gave up the homeowners' potluck party for the golf gang sing-along last year, then give the mike a rest this year (and other people a good night's rest, too, ha-ha). Also, don't be averse to scheduling low-key lunches or *merienda* with good friends (it doesn't have to be a bloody all-nighter), or even planning get-togethers for after Christmas or New Year (like we said, it's a looong season). I have a friend I always meet for a vegetarian post-New Year lunch, and it still feels like a celebration.

2. **Keep your pockets of quiet time.** People skip workouts, meditation, playtime with kids, and other essential personal time on the pretext of being too busy this holiday season. I try to keep doing the things that have kept me healthy and sane during the year—I do my yoga, even for half an hour, walk my dogs around the block, or curl up in bed at least a couple of nights a week with a good book or some quiet time. Then I don't get too sick and tired of the merrymaking.

3. **Make room for the feasts.** Every diet expert will tell you that skipping meals is a no-no, but somehow it works during the holidays—or at least, a wiser version of it. If you know you're looking forward to your aunt's paella tonight, then have a salad for lunch and drink lots of water before dinner. You'll be full, and you won't feel too bad about a second serving. Besides, I tell myself, why spend so much on food I have to buy myself during the day when I'm eating free tonight? Yipee! Another technique I've tried to master: I stay away from the main courses and hover over the salads and cold plates, where most of the healthier stuff can often be found. I'm diabetic, so it's in my very best interest to steer clear of the dessert table entirely, although this is where my defenses usually crumble. It's a great excuse to throw around, though, when an over-enthusiastic hostess tries to stuff everything down your throat: "Wow, I'd love to, but I'm diabetic, you see, and I don't want to fall into a coma at your lovely party."

4. **Finally, think very long and very hard about your gift-giving.** At this age, I've figured I'm too old to be a hypocrite and give gifts to people I'm not nuts about. In fact, I've even given up on the idea of mass gift-giving altogether, as I am hoping that the friends I've made all my life aren't just after the presents (if you are, guys, now is a good time to tell me). Besides, I know that any hurriedly bought dust-gatherer or that 27th mug will only be stashed away or quite possibly recycled because the people on my list don't really need another mug anyway, and I can't afford bespoke presents.

A few years ago, I got a card from designer Reimon Gutierrez that simply stated that a donation had been made in my name to his favorite nuns. Bingo! You not only spare yourself the gargantuan stress of Christmas shopping, but you make your money really, truly mean something.

Of course, I've kept some people on my material gift list, like kids and the people who need it, like favorite security guards and cheerful office messengers I'd like to thank for making my life more pleasant. But by and large, for the last two years, my idea of gift-giving has been to print the latest cute picture of my dog Banana, turn it into a Christmas card, and give it to friends as proof that a donation has been made in their name to the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS). I'm proud to say my friends have loved it, and many are looking forward to the latest installment in their Banana gallery—and I've steered clear of every mall and *tiangge* in town!

Pick a cause that's close to your heart, whether it's streetchildren, typhoon victims, the environment, or women's livelihood projects; make a list, and estimate how much you would spend on a present for each person; add up the amount; and write the check. Oh, and you don't have to write down the amount in the card, either, just as you wouldn't leave a price tag on your gift. If somebody grumbles, then maybe they never deserved to be on your list in the first place, right?

Besides, because we party too much, we sometimes forget that the very first Christmas was a really low-key affair: the hosts didn't dress up or serve food, there were very few guests and just three major presents, and even the animals were allowed in—but everybody felt it in their hearts. And I'm pretty sure nobody was too stressed out. •

By Cora Llamas

Twice Blessed

Gifts that keep giving

YUP, you've heard it too many times: It is more blessed to give...

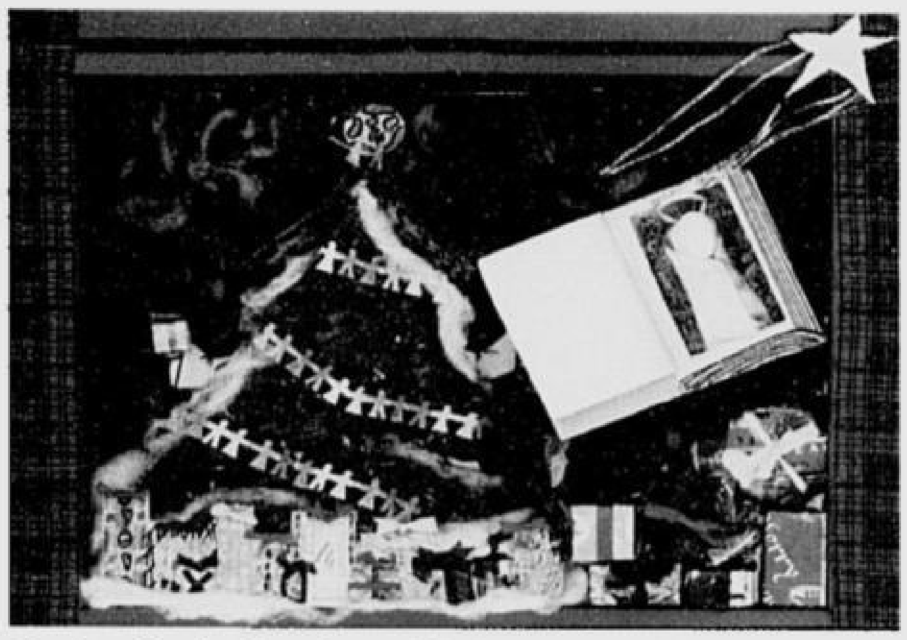
Fortunately, there are some gifts that are doubly special. They raise funds for a cause so the giver is blessed with feelings of goodwill while the recipient feels just as benevolent knowing that the gift has made one community more self-sufficient, sent some impoverished kids to school, or given another day's meal to the less fortunate

1. Christmas cards designed by parishioners aged 5-12, of the Santuario de San Jose Parish in Greenhills. Sold individually at P10 each and in assorted packs of 10 pieces at P100/pack, the cards will fund formation and outreach programs for youth groups in various communities supported by the parish. Contact info: 725-2044 or 724-4139.

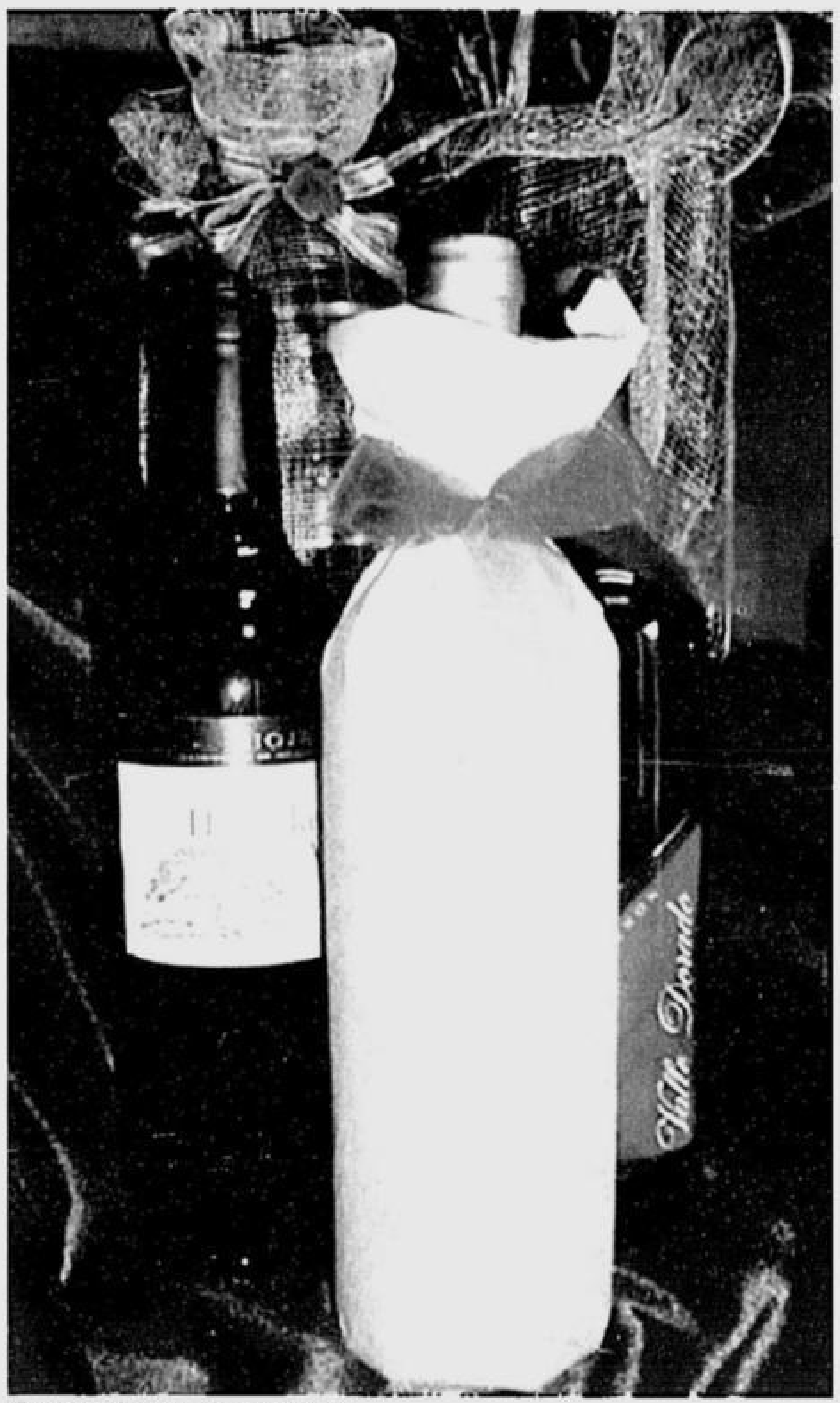
2. More Christmas cards, this time from the Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross, hope to raise funds for the construction of a new seminary and pastoral center for the public school youth. Call Bro. Leo at 0918-5949639.

3. Fund-raising through card giving is also the Ateneo Alumni Association's (AAA) way of sustaining programs for its Gawad-Kalinga project at Molave Village. Joey Velasco donated his art for the cards. Call Donna or JQ at the AAA at 926-6067 or Ica Gutierrez at the GHK Head Office at 718-1873; also e-mail gk.igutierrez@gmail.com.

4. Buying a glass of wine can also help the environment as it comes in gift-wrappers designed to protect the environment while supporting the many Filipino entrepreneurs who design and create the paper materials. The beverages may come from distant shores but the wrappers are proudly Pinoy, made from agricultural wastes such as dried leaves, banana stalks, used paper, *salago* barks, abaca and grasses. Call Ibski Romero at 0917-240098, e-mail ibskzone@gmail.com, or click www.ibskikayshop.multiply.com.



Santuario de San Jose Christmas cards



Eco-giftwrapped wine

5. Lay a Christmas feast on your table with recipes straight out of "Cooking Lessons," the best-selling cookbook of culinary trainor and cancer survivor Beth Romualdez. Proceeds from book sales will be donated to the Philippine Cancer Society. Email anvilpublishing@yahoo.com for more details.

TUGDAAN
TUGDAAN

Tugdaan products benefit Mangyan tribes

6. An angel who saves a family from a road mishap, a mother's sacrifice that saved her child, and other similar miracles are recounted in the Blessings Series, a three-volume feel-good anthology edited by award-winning writer and educator Queena Lee-Chua. Book sales will benefit the Bukas Palad Foundation, Inc. E-mail anvilpublishing@yahoo.com for details.

cooking lessons
beth romualdez

Good cooking and goodwill to cancer patients

7. More cards and ho-ho-ho, a basket of cheers. If you'd like to help out the Mangyans and other indigenous tribes, why not give Christmas cards made by indigenous children and baskets of Tugdaan All Natural Products made from pure, organic ingredients? Contact action@cartwheelfoundation.org or call (632) 584-1532 for orders.

8. The Festival of Trees (FOT) is an annual Christmas charity ball organized by the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), which promotes business' commitment to social development, and the Makati Garden Club. Splendid Christmas trees designed by MGC members and precious artwork donated by noted Filipino artists are auctioned off to raise funds for PBSP programs that create sustainable livelihood opportunities and provide social services to depressed communities. For inquiries, call Jean Guittap of PBSP Foundation Affairs Unit at 527-3741.

9. Give yourself and your friends some aspirational dreams: where to go over the holidays, or in summer. Travel books fit the bill. There's "Nina's Travel Sketches" by Nina Lim Yuson that can also be used as a guest book, and "Sana's Passport" by Sana Sta. Ana, a travel journal cum scrapbook/photo album that includes travel reminders, itineraries, trivia, interesting sights, restaurant guides and tips on good accommodations, shopping finds, and so on. Sales from Yuson's book will benefit the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, and Museo Pambata. Proceeds from both travel books will also go to All Together in Dignity (ATD) Fourth World Philippines, which works with families living in poverty. The books are available at A Different Bookstore and Memo Boutique. Or contact Yuson at nlyuson@gmail.com. and Sta. Ana at info.artesana@gmail.com •

Feature

By Mio de la Cruz

Power Food for Super Athletes

For former taekwondo champ Monsour Del Rosario, foregoing steaks on his way to a healthier diet may yet prove to be a tougher fight than previous martial arts competitions he's had to face

MAKING a list and checking it twice is what everyone knows Santa Claus does around this time of year—just before he hops into his magic sleigh to deliver bags of goodies for people who have been nice.

For Monsour del Rosario, however, the words take on a whole new meaning this time around. It's not just Santa who needs to keep tabs, he says, if one wants to be assured of happy holidays.

His own Christmas list, he laughs, is an enumeration of healthy foods, which is conspicuously tacked on the door of the family ref. The list reminds everyone of what food should be served at home—whether or not it's Christmas. His own food basket, Monsour adds, would be filled with healthy stuff like fish, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Staying healthy through the holidays via a regimen that he has imposed on himself in the face of the temptations of the season, is uppermost in his mind, admits this former taekwondo champion turned action star and fitness entrepreneur. The health regimen is his answer to the high cholesterol count that he's been diagnosed with.

For any other person, this may not be such a life-defining moment. But for Monsour it was "a shocking discovery," enough to compel him to drastically change his eating habits. "It must be the steak, my favorite," he muses. "I could have steak everyday and I would not mind it."

Faced with dire health consequences, he has sworn not to touch his favorite dish until his cholesterol level is back to normal. He has also steered clear of fatty cuts of meat, processed food, cheeses, pastries, and sweets.

It may yet prove to be a tougher fight than the previous taekwondo tilts that Monsour has been in, starting with his first international tournament, the 1982 World University Taekwondo Championship.

Romy Homillada

For Monsour, Christmas is a healthy time.

For all the hurts and bruises he suffered from taekwondo, Monsour remembers the encounters not for the stinging pain he endured or for his fractured bones, but for the sense of honor and pride he accomplished for the country as a former two-time SEA Games gold medalist, 1988 Asiad silver medalist, 1985 World Taekwondo bronze medalist, and Olympic Games quarterfinalist.

At his taekwondo gym at the Fort, there's little trace of the bruises he had suffered as a taekwondo warrior years ago.Today, he goes about his business in denims, tight-fitting shirt, and baseball cap. At 45, Monsour still looks like a youthful taekwondo champ, a dashing magazine model, and a ruggedly handsome action star on the silver screen.

"I continue training to keep myself physically fit," says this champ who looks like he could still compete in next year's Beijing Olympics. Well, he'd prefer to fight in the more backbreaking Universal Fighting Championship (UFC) if he were younger, he says. "I have also been eating the right food lately," he adds.

Martial arts, he notes, "is a lifetime commitment.It does not stop with competitions; it is a journey of discovery and finding harmony."

He finds it in a doctor-recommended diet of low-calorie food that's high on starch and fiber. This provides energy and helps in digestion while keeping one's weight down.

Despite his new spartan diet, Monsour is unperturbed and does not feel too deprived. "If we want to attain something, we need to sacrifice and work for it," he says. Monsour's philosophical approach to dieting is born of his experience as an athlete. "More than anything else, it is the sport that saved me from what could have been a life of sin and crime," he says, recalling how devastated he was when his parents separated. "I tried to do everything wrong to express what I felt about their separation."

He was in this rebel mood when he chanced upon the sport and tried it just for fun. Instead of joining a gang of misfits, he decided to take up the sport seriously and unshackled his frustrations against his opponents on the floor, knocking out every one of them like a rampaging suicide killer on the loose until he became the undisputed champion in his division.

Taekwondo is a punishing sport that is definitely not meant for the faint of heart, he adds. To be competition-worthy, one needs to consult a physician to check physical fitness and a dietician to regulate diet.

"It's a must," said Monsour, who has retired from active competition. He and former teammate and fellow Olympian Stephen Fernandez own and manage the Olympic Taekwondo Training Institute located at The Fort. "Anyone who decides to actively engage in a sport should consult a doctor as a precautionary measure."

Athletes are always encouraged to reach their maximum nutrition potential during training, so they have to incorporate into their meals a nutrition plan that provides for a rich source of carbohydrates to release their energy and protein to help in muscle recovery and repair.

During his competitive days, Monsour's diet consisted primarily of banana, mango, oranges, apples, peaches, eggs, kangkong, and chopsuey.

"I made my own research to determine a good power diet for athletes," recalls the 6'1", 195-pound Communication Arts graduate of De la Salle University.

These days, his goal is no longer to bag another taekwondo gold for the country, but to live long enough to enjoy the company of his wife Joy and son Matthew.

"It's good to have them with me in my journey," he enthused, obviously charmed and captivated by his newest and most precious inspiration in his continuing "journey of discovery and finding harmony." •

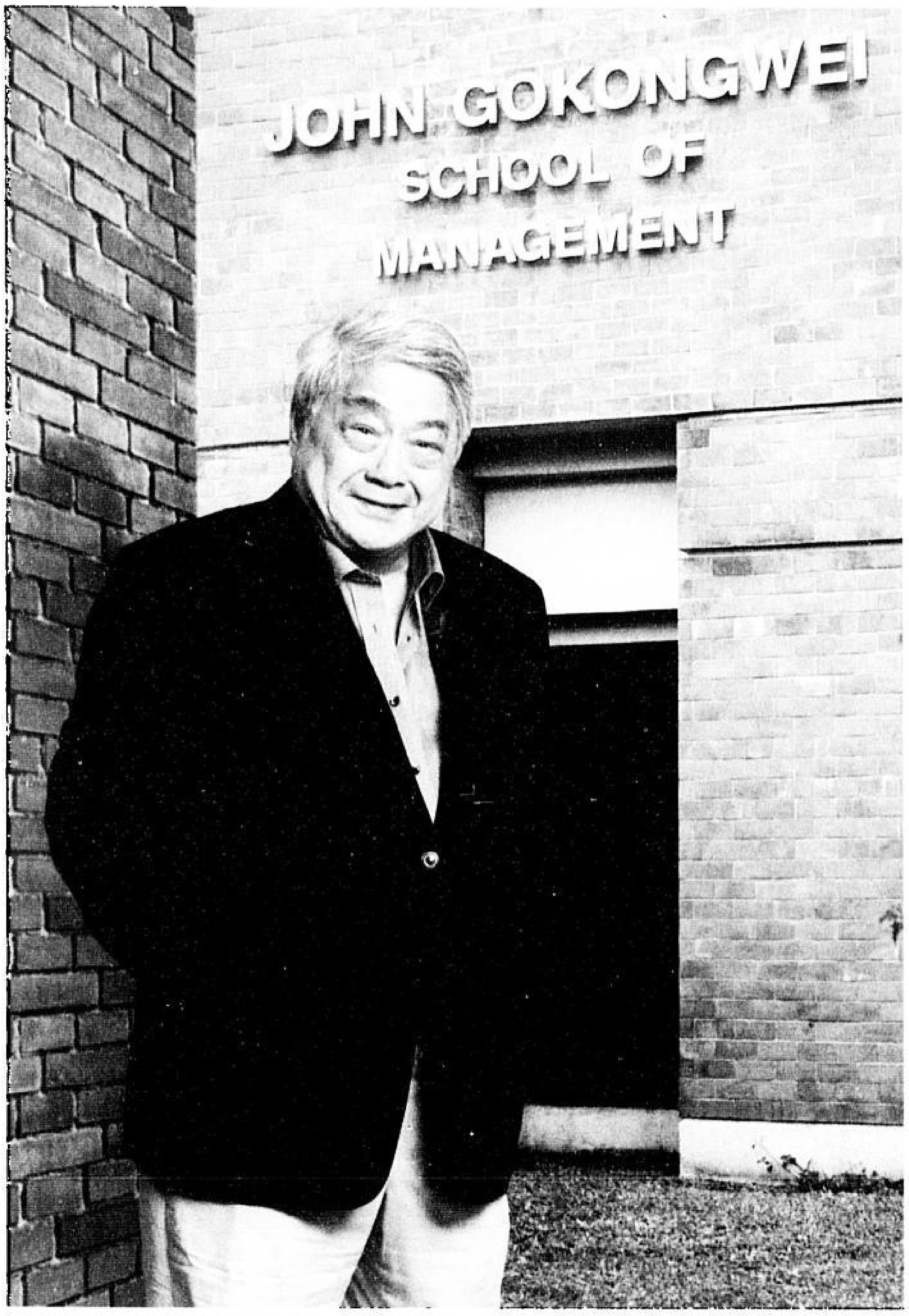
John Gokongwei's School of Thought

One of Asia's richest men shares his thoughts on the growth prospects of the Philippines—and what you should be doing to make these prospects real

JOHN L. Gokongwei Jr., self-made billionaire, family man and philanthropist, doesn't hedge his bets. Not when it comes to the country's future. "Very few people want to risk their reputation and their money to set up their own business," he muses. "If I can convince just one person to go into entrepreneurship, then I would be very happy." What the Philippines needs, he adds, are a lot more entrepreneurs.

It seems ironic that even as Gokongwei is an evangelist for entrepreneurship, the Ateneo's John Gokongwei School of Management (JGSOM) continues to produce graduates so employable that they usually end up being well-paid managers of companies other than their own, instead of striking out on their own. But it's all just a matter of time, acknowledges this tycoon. "Entrepreneurship is also about timing," he adds.

Gokongwei is realistic enough to know that entrepreneurship is not for everyone. "There are people out there who are obviously more comfortable working from 9-to-5," he says. But properly trained and given an entrepreneurial mindset, these young men and women could eventually take what they've learned from their employment and set up businesses of their own, he notes.



Evangelist for entrepreneurship

Such optimism has been fueled all the more by the latest recognition received by the school that bears his name. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has recently recognized JGSOM as the country's first Center of Excellence in Entrepreneurship education. "That's quite an achievement, being the first," the trailblazing Gokongwei remarks. He'd like to see JGSOM do its share in developing entrepreneurs, he adds, because it's a constant source of frustration for him that so many Filipinos prefer to be employed rather than pursue business ventures that could eventually transform the country.

"Look at Taiwan, look at Thailand, look at China," he admonishes. "These countries have fantastic entrepreneurs. Our people end up being call center agents and OFWs. Our culture favors the production of lawyers and magistrates. But what we really need are more entrepreneurs, more factories, more industries."

One industry that he thinks is missing out on market opportunities is tourism. "We have the friendliest, most musical people. We have great beaches, which China does not have. But we're not putting in enough resources to take advantage of this. All we have is Boracay; and the growth in Bohol is too slow."

Already his companies are benefiting from this vision. "Our hotels are 100 percent occupied and our Cebu Pacific planes will be flying in thousands of Chinese visitors to come and enjoy our country." And no, he doesn't mind if these guests cram themselves four to a room to save money. "They'll still end up spending money on us," he retorts.

Targeting the Chinese market is Gokongwei's next challenge for Filipinos brave enough to heed his call for entrepreneurs. With China's population growing at the runaway rate of 12 percent a year, the 80-year-old visionary points out that the equivalent of another China or a market twice as large will be ready in about eight years. As for the challenge of tackling such a large and diverse market, Gokongwei merely shrugs. "Everything is difficult. But you have to try. If you don't even try, then nothing will ever come of it." •

9 Rules to Succeed in Business

The following is an excerpt from "John L. Gokongwei Jr: The Path of Entrepreneurship," written by Marites A. Khanser and published by the Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University. Copies are now available in leading bookstores, while bulk orders may be placed by calling Alice Estacio at 426-6001 loc. 5502.

1. **Change is inevitable and flexibility is the key.** "During the course of my business career, I always look for new developments in the business environment, such as information and policies, that may affect our operations. The decision to move from peddling soap on bicycles to bringing tires to Manila on *batels*, to opening the first flour company, to being one of the largest conglomerates in the Philippines today is a testament to that flexibility."

2. **Personal stakes in the company encourage everyone to work hard.** "When I started our business, I gave each of my siblings shares in the company. My siblings appreciated that each of them had a personal stake in the company and they all worked very hard for its progress. However, it is not only my siblings, but also our employees who are committed to making our business successful. We are currently studying a stock option plan to be given to employees worth

promoting and keeping, giving them the same sense of ownership like those of my siblings."

3. **Mistakes and disappointments are inevitable.** "You and I make mistakes. What is important, though, is how each person deals with them. Take them in stride, learn the lessons, and move on. The conglomerate has had its share of wrong decisions, but as long as the business was not hurt badly, we move on. One rule we abide by in business dealings is risking only up to 15 percent of our net worth in any single venture."

4. **Good brand building equals reputation.** "One of the most important things in our business is building brands. Having good brands translates to quality, reputation, and good governance. Our conglomerate is now in seven industries, and we continuously build top brands. We are now present in seven Asian countries and we hope to be present in the rest of the world."

5. **Family support is crucial.** "In all these years that I've worked for the company, my wife Bia has always been there to support all my decisions and never got in the way. Oftentimes, she serves as my sounding board. She is receptive and gives good advice. In fact, most people do not know that she organized what is now our retail business. She was also there, taking care of the children, making sure they grew up to be good, responsible individuals, while I was busy expanding the business. She has indeed done a good job."

6. **Never lose sleep thinking of business risks.** "I used to think about the business and all the risks involved. However, while many or most businessmen would be stressed out and lose sleep, I try to never let it bother me. I believe that sleeping is a joy of life. My daily routine consists of an afternoon nap. As much as possible, I do not accept lunch appointments so as not to miss my nap that invigorates me enough to work in the office up to dinnertime."

7. **Pausing to recharge brings new vigor.** "When things get hectic or busy at work, I like to step back and take some rest by going back to Cebu, where I spent my childhood years. I like to look around and reminisce on the time I put up my little store, and when I realize how I have worked so hard to be where I am right now, I am comforted by the fact that I did not do so bad after all!"

8. **Reading and traveling enrich one's mind.** "There are two things I enjoy doing the most in my spare time. One is reading. I set aside at least two hours a day to read. I read everything from the daily newspapers, to biographies, to business books, to company reports and on just about any subject I feel like learning about. Reading widens my horizon, and the new information I get helps me in decisions I make in my personal or business affairs."

He adds: "The second is traveling. When time permits, I travel and explore the world with my wife, visiting cities, museums, etc. There is a different perspective when one is exposed to other cultures outside your own. I sometimes get new ideas for our products when I travel. The birth of C2 was from a visit to China. People were lugging about these bottles of tea and drinking them on the go. I thought to myself that the Philippines is ready for such a product!

9. **Philanthropy is a personal satisfaction.** "To be where I am right now took years of hard work. I consider it lucky, too, that our business decisions bore fruit and successes. It is only fitting and very rewarding for me to give back to society. I started my philanthropy when I was 30 years old when I gave funds to the Sacred Heart School in Cebu City for a building. I have not stopped since. Ateneo de Manila University and San Carlos University are the most recent recipients of endowments to build their School of Management and School of Engineering, respectively. The Gokongwei Brothers Foundation (GBF) has been established to ensure the continuity of embarking on projects focused on education. On my 80th birthday, I gave half of my shares in JG Summit Holdings to GBF." •

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A Truly Higher Education

In search of business excellence?
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[illegible]

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, Tom Peters and Bob Waterman published a book that started management teams all over the world on a continuing quest for excellence. "In Search of Excellence," the book written by the two McKinsey consultants, was a phenomenon, and the term "excellence" has become part of management speak since then.

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) started its own quest for excellence in business and management education by seeking Centers of Excellence—colleges that have "exhibited an excellent ability to produce quality business and management professionals relevant to the needs of the industry, to conduct research that contributes to the body of knowledge in the field, and to engage in extension services that contribute to national development."

This year, CHED found not one, but two Centers of Excellence: one in Business Administration, and another in Entrepreneurship, but both in the same school—the John Gokongwei School of Management (JGSOM) at the Ateneo de Manila University. Thus far, of the more than 1,500 schools overseen by CHED, JGSOM is the only school that has qualified as a Center of Excellence in any of the fields of business education.

Explaining the extraordinarily tough criteria and the stringent evaluation process that CHED used, Dr. Oscar Torralba, head of the CHED Technical Panel, quotes Browning: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?"

Continues Torralba, "We have to raise the bar if we are to develop graduates who are globally competitive. Our graduates should be as good as, if not better, than their peers around the world, because we now realize that we are no longer isolated from the rest of the global market. CHED's vision for Philippine business education is anchored on three themes: global competitiveness, market responsiveness, and IT-enablement. Our schools should, at the very least, be compliant with these three themes."

However, being merely compliant has never been the goal of JGSOM and its hard-working Dean, Rudy Ang. As early as 2002, when JGSOM was launched, the school committed itself to the vision of becoming "a regionally recognized center of excellence and leadership in undergraduate business education, shaping its students into business leaders who are equipped to respond to the needs of tomorrow's world."

With this vision came the determination to implement and deliver the goods. Aggressive recruitment, coupled with rigorous selection, has resulted in an impressive undergraduate student body. In 2006, over 4,200 high school students competed for the 750 slots in its freshman class for June 2007. Of the 767 students who eventually made it, an impressive 24 percent, or one out of every four, had graduated from high school with honors (including 31 high school valedictorians).

The assembly of intelligence and talent in the school is further honed by a first-rate faculty line-up that combines world class academic training with top-tier professional experience. "Our faculty hold advanced degrees from some of the most prestigious business schools in the world, including Harvard, Yale, Northwestern, and Wharton," says Dean Ang. "On top of that, many of them have held or continue to hold top management jobs, including CEO positions in some of the country's largest corporations. They offer our students an excellent balance of academic training and senior management experience, providing them with the dual perspectives of theory and practice when faced with important business decisions."

The formula of raw talent honed at the hands of seasoned faculty and of academic research peppered with real life insights, seems to be working well for JGSOM graduates. In the graduating class of 2005, for example, one graduate was offered a starting salary of P150,000 a month, while other graduates received even higher offers to work outside the country.

But it's not just students who benefit from this combination of talent and experience. Just this year, JGSOM put up the Family Business Development Center (FBDC), which aims to be the primary learning resource for business families and family businesses in the ASEAN region. "Family businesses are a crucial engine of economic growth," says Ricky Mercado, who oversees the FBDC. "We want to help families manage their businesses better by making them confront hard family issues along with the many challenges of the global business environment."

JGSOM's focus on creating world-class professionals and entrepreneurs is consistent with CHED's aim of developing Filipinos who will be able to face the challenges the world has to offer. "The best protection for the Philippines in a globally competitive world," CHED's Torralba points out, "is not by putting up walls, but by enabling our own graduates and by giving them the competencies, skills, and standards that are at par with the best schools in the world."

"We want to encourage the drive for excellence in our schools. Our culture values quality education; and education is a great equalizer. You may not be as rich as other people when you enter school, but if you study well in a reputable school, then the path to success should be open to you." Torralba hopes that other schools would eventually become Centers of Excellence in business education. So far, however, only Ateneo de Manila's Gokongwei School of Management fits the bill. •

First Person

By Kellda Centeno

World Class

A first-hand look at Ateneo JGSOM's globe-trotting program for juniors

Kellda, Celine, and a dignified friend enjoying their stint abroad

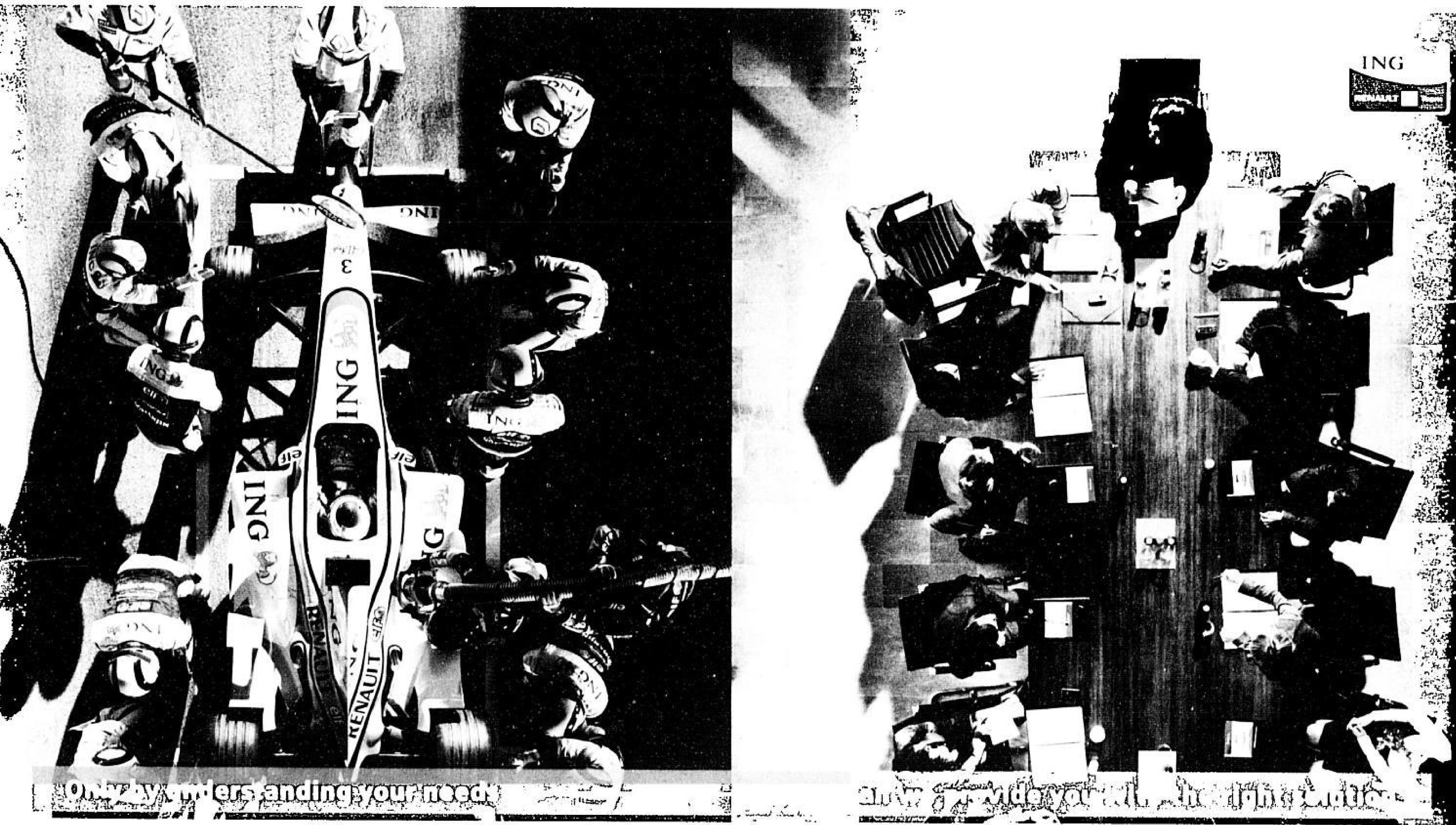
DURING my stay in Santa Clara University (SCU) in California, I would hear Kelly Clarkson's "Breakaway" all over the place. The song really captures my Junior Term Abroad (JTA) experience: "Take a chance, make a change, and breakaway." I joined JTA because I wanted to experience something different and break away from Manila for a period of time. My stay in SCU definitely lived up to that expectation.

The biggest change was learning how to live on my own. Walsh, a co-ed dorm on campus, was my home for four months and I definitely had a crash course on doing domestic chores. I shrank an entire load of clothes while trying to use the spin dryer! Imagine two weeks' worth of clothes, at least one size too small! I burned one of my white shirts trying to iron it, and I almost set off the fire alarm while toasting some bagels for breakfast. At least there was no permanent damage to my room.

Classes in SCU were also very different. With three to four classes each term, the school load is definitely lighter compared to the six to eight classes we take in Ateneo. Americans also tend to be more participative and opinionated than Ateneans (even debaters like myself). They'll argue to death even if it's just about a dolphin's right not to become canned tuna. My friend Celine and I managed to rise above the clutter.

In our International Business class, we made a PowerPoint presentation for our group report even when we saw that earlier groups used cartolina. Our content was perhaps just as good

(continued on page 13)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Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

			8		6	5		
				3		6		
2	4							
8								4
	5		1	6	2		9	
1								3
							8	9
		1		4				
		9	2		3			

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ Answers in PDI, Dec. 17 issue 12/16

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Answer to previous puzzle

5	2	1	4	6	9	3	8	7
9	7	3	2	8	5	6	1	4
4	6	8	1	7	3	5	9	2
6	4	7	8	5	2	1	3	9
3	5	2	7	9	1	4	6	8
1	8	9	3	4	6	7	2	5
7	1	4	9	3	8	2	5	6
2	9	5	6	1	4	8	7	3
8	3	6	5	2	7	9	4	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ PDI, Dec. 15

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Browser

From Grinch to Green

12 more ways to enjoy Christmas- -and save our planet too

Choose gifts wisely

1. Reuse old Christmas trees or create your own using potted plants or trees.

2. When buying holiday décor, opt for items that are locally made, non-toxic, reusable and require no electricity.

3. Create garlands made of recycled materials such as old cards, gift wraps and ribbons instead of Christmas lights to cut on energy use.

4. If you must use holiday lights, choose safe, energy efficient and long lasting lights such as light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. Use only Christmas lights and electrical ornaments approved by the Bureau of Product Standards.

5. Use Christmas lights sparingly. Switch them off whenever you're away or asleep.

6. For Christmas parties, avoid using plastic or Styrofoam products and go for utensils that can be washed and reused, including cloth napkins.

7. When cleaning up after parties, separate the biodegradable and non-biodegradable discards, and recycle the biodegradables (such as leftover food) for pets, or compost them to make natural soil enhancers.

8. Plan your shopping trips to save on gas. Walk, bike or take public transpo when you can.

9. Bring a reusable bag, basket or *bayong* when you shop. Say no to plastic bags!

10. Stay away from items with too much wrapping, especially plastic and non-biodegradable stuff. Choose eco-friendly products!

11. Choose gifts that do not need to be wrapped such as potted plants, massage from blind masseurs, gift checks, concert tickets, raffle tickets, an e-card or e-mail.

12. If you need to wrap the gift, use old magazines or newspapers or bandannas. For more information, please contact the EcoWaste Coalition at 632-9290376. •

Figure it out

7,000+: Estimated number of educational institutions worldwide offering business degrees in 2004-2005; includes about 1,500 in the US

1881: Year that the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, one of the first American business schools, was established.

540: Total number of institutions accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business as of March 2007; includes 450 in the United States alone and 14 in Asia; the AACSB accreditation is generally regarded as the standard for MBA programs.

1,100+: Estimated number of educational institutions offering business degrees in the Philippines in 2004-2005

1: Total number of institutions in the Philippines with AACSB accreditation. Only the Asian Institute of Management has AACSB accreditation as of March 2007

$24,000: Base tuition for the 16-month MBA at the AIM

30,000+: Number of AIM alumni worldwide

5: Number of campuses of the De La Salle Professional Schools Ramon V. Del Rosario Sr. Graduate School of Business

1,596: Total number of students enrolled at the Ateneo Graduate School of Business MBA program in the third Trimester, 2006-2007.

Prepared by the Inquirer Research

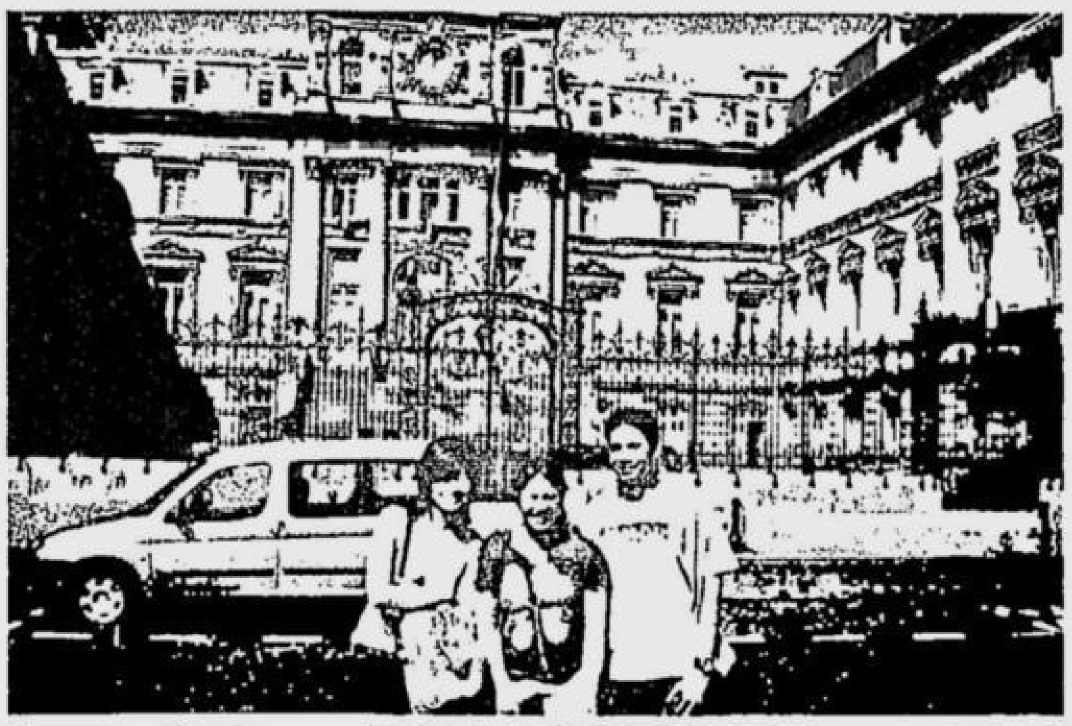
Sources: Asian Institute of Management, De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business, Ateneo Graduate School of Business, University of the Philippines MBA website, the 2007 AACSB Guide to Business Education

World Class (from page 11)

as theirs, but we definitely raised the bar and succeeding groups followed suit. We both ended the term with straight A's, a feat difficult enough in Ateneo but one that proved how an Ateneo education is indeed internationally competitive.

However, what I remember the most came from Professor Delacroix, my professor in International Business. He said that I get a lot done because I work hard, but that my American peers can get the same results in a shorter time because they've learned to work smart. Working smart was a foreign concept, but one that I have found immensely useful in Ateneo and at work. When I catch myself spending an inordinate amount of time on one task, I can still hear the professor telling me to work smart.

But of course, the best part of JTA was meeting new people and going to new places. It was a four-month adventure and I met people from France, Italy, Moldova, Poland, Latin America, Russia and different parts of Asia. I also learned how to carve a pumpkin for Halloween, rode all the roller coasters until Celine and I couldn't walk straight, went to Las Vegas and tried snowboarding in Utah. I went clubbing in San Francisco, hopped on a train for a day in San Francisco and enjoyed dorm and frat parties.



From castles to camels: Ateneo JGSOM juniors have a choice of learning adventures

When friends ask if they should join JTA or take the chance of studying abroad, I immediately tell them to go and not to worry about what they're momentarily leaving behind. There's much to learn and so much to see. Sometimes Manila can become so small, it's good to step out to gain a new perspective on things beyond what we're so used to. •

Ateneo JGSOM's Junior Term Abroad (JTA) was developed to help students get a global perspective, and is now the largest student mobility program in the Philippines. Students study for a semester abroad, choosing from a number of schools around the world. This year, 25 percent of Ateneo JGSOM's junior class participated in JTA 2007, going to schools in France, Norway, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea, Austria, Taiwan, Japan, Australia and the USA.

Kellda Centeno was a JTA participant and graduated magna cum laude *from the Management Honors program of Ateneo JGSOM. She was one of the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines in 2006 and is now a management trainee for Unilever Philippines*

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Jump Starting Student Start-Ups

The Ateneo JGSOM Business Accelerator (SOMBA) gives enterprising business majors a running start with what they hope will become big business

Goodfalafels: Ateneo JGSOM students David del Rosario, Anna Tantuico, Neil Ching, Isabel Jalbuena and Jaime Paraiso run Chickpea Deli in Robinsons Galleria

FALAFEL for Filipinos? Everyday cosmetics for men? Whey powder for mixed martial arts fighters? These businesses may raise eyebrows among professionals—but they're legitimate ventures started by students enrolled in the JGSOM Business Accelerator Program (SOMBA).

"We created the program so that we can help students start their own business," says JGSOM Dean Rudy Ang, the program's creator. "We believe that in today's environment, the best way to train our students to become 'men for others' is to help them start up companies that will open up employment opportunities, and develop products and services for society at large."

Not every product or service that students think of can qualify for support from SOMBA. "If a product or service already exists, why bother starting a similar business?" asks Armando "Madix" Miclat, who heads the SOMBA program. "Innovation is about coming up with a twist on existing products or services, or creating something totally new and different, and that's a requirement we have for students who want to join SOMBA."

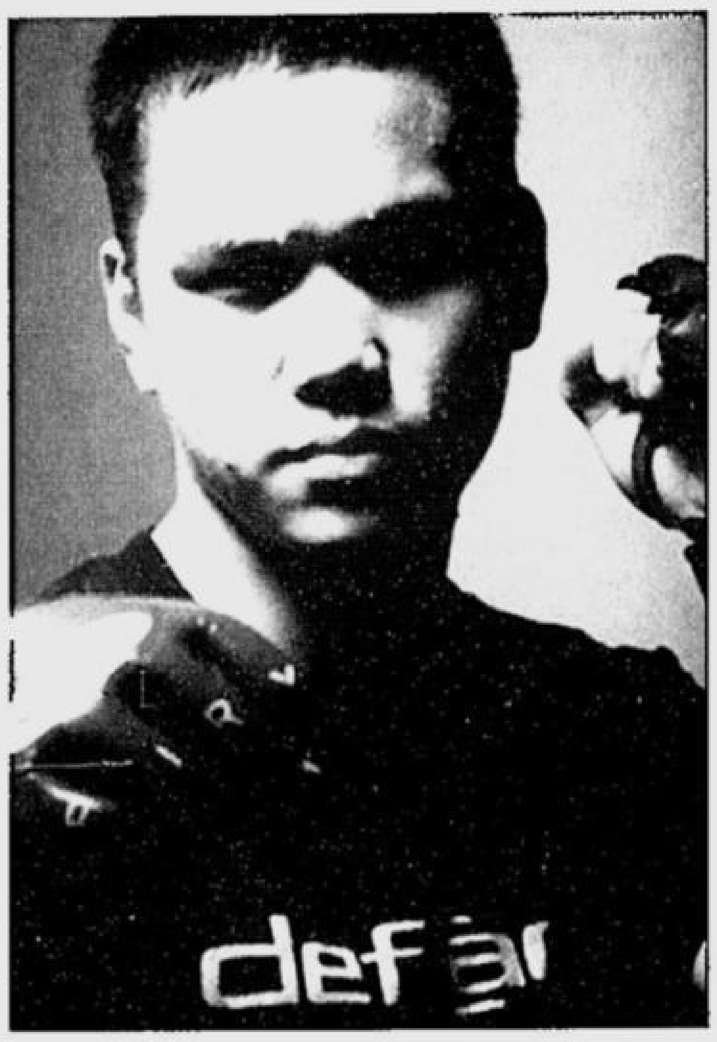
One example is a company called Mirrus Advanced Nutrition (www.mirrus.biz). Recounts Joel Dayrit : "Four of my groupmates were body-builders, and they suggested developing a whey supplement for body-building. Another groupmate, Paul, was taking Management of Applied Chemistry, and he has a knack for developing this fantastic formulation for our product."

Aly Yap

More than just a one note SOMBA: Just a few of the new products being offered by enrollees

Dayrit and groupmates Michael Cruz, Paul Sy, Dennis Chua, Harvey Tanedo, and Andre Dy, pooled together P20,000 each to form the company. With P120,000, the students went into business—and quickly saw their capital vanish as they sponsored several tests to develop their formula into a commercial product approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. "Thank God for SOMBA," says Joel, "because I don't think we would have been able to maintain this company without their support structure."

The students persisted with their vision even after graduation, and today, Mirrus is an established company producing and distributing products such as IMPACT High Performance Whey Protein. Local bodybuilders, such as Richie Rosales (the first Filipino to ever win a medal at the IPF International Men's World Open Powerlifting Championships) and Richard Lasprilla (jiu-jitsu gold medalist and mixed martial arts fighter) now swear by the product. In today's world, that means they also blog about it—giving Joel and his co-owners a high-impact boost in their own corporate performance.



www.mirrus.biz

Whey better: Mixed martial arts fighter Richard Lesprilla swears by the energizing and recuperative effects of Impact.

This year, nutrition of another sort became the focus of senior BS Management students Anna Tantuico, David del Rosario, Jaime Paraiso, Neil Ching, and Isabel Jalbuena. With SOMBA's help and support, the group set up Chickpea Deli (3rd Level, Robinson's Galleria), which offers hearty falafel wraps and sandwiches—a treat for people who want something tasty, but don't want to put on pounds or raise their cholesterol levels.

"Our falafel feels and tastes like meat, but is made of chickpeas, herbs, and spices, so it's high in protein and low in fat. It's ideal for people who want something tasty and filling, but don't want to break their diet," says Tantuico, who thought of offering falafel to Filipinos after having acquired a taste for it during a trip to Spain.

Although falafel is very popular in the Middle East, and is even considered Israel's national food, the group decided to adapt their recipe to local tastes. "We wanted to introduce falafel in the Philippines in a way that wasn't intimidating or particularly exotic," says David.

The students are optimistic that their business venture will flourish even after they graduate, given the passion they have for it. But success has already come, says Neil. "Our parents know that the business has already done us some good; we've learned more from it than we would have inside the classroom." •

Photographs by Aly Yap

THE JSEC
THE JGSOM STUDENT ENTERPRISE CENTER

Learning from the market: The JGSOM Student Enterprise Center

Earning their Lesson

At the JGSOM Student Enterprise Center, students learn about business by actually running one

TUCKED away in Ateneo's Loyola campus, just between a manicured lawn and a dirt parking lot, is one of the school's most fascinating laboratories. Open six days a week, the lab, officially known as the JGSOM Student Enterprise Center, or JSEC, features experiments run by students eager for a taste of entrepreneurship.

Every challenge faced by a business—developing products, motivating staff, balancing finances, attracting customers in a limited market, competing against established brands—is replicated in this microcosm of the competitive retail environment. Students must come up with a viable business plan, negotiate their lease, secure the necessary permits and licenses, and learn that, unlike doing case studies in the classroom, you can actually lose money in JSEC if you don't pay attention.

"The best way to learn how to run a business is by actually doing it," says JGSOM Dean Rudy Ang. "It's well and good to know the accounting principles, or HR concepts, or marketing techniques, but this sort of hands-on learning experience helps students to appreciate their lessons far better than the most grueling final exam."

A look at how two businesses are faring, and the students behind them:

Chinky Chickens

"The canteen in the gym where our team practices was closing down, and some of the people there were looking for work," explains Chris Tiu, UAAP 2007 Mythical Five Team member, upcoming TV host, Management Engineering major, and a start-up entrepreneur. "I wanted to help them out, and since I wanted to start a business and knew that the canteen employees could cook, I teamed up with two other classmates to set up Chinky Chickens."

The desire to help others earned him a spot as one of the first tenants of JSEC, but it was the quality of his food and service that made Chinky Chickens a success on campus. Asked if his popularity as a UAAP basketball star gives him an undue advantage, Chris points out that he has a lot of return customers, people who like the food enough to keep coming back. "Even my family raves about the crispy chicken adobo flakes," he says of the dish he is most proud of.

Chris sees parallels between managing his business and leading a basketball team. "It's important to lead by example. In basketball, you can't preach hard work and then show up late for practice. It's the same in business—you can't talk about the need for austerity or professionalism if you're not particular about the details, or if you're always late for meetings."

Ironically, despite his upcoming professional engagements on TV and his endorsement deals, Chris says that the greatest lesson he has learned in running his own business is the value of money. "I realized," he says, "that it's not easy to make money."

Matcha Green Tea

"I asked my dad for a car, and he refused to give me one," recalls Ric Lim, a junior taking up BS Management. "Instead, he gave me the capital to start a business, and told me to try to earn enough money to buy my own car." Thus marked the start of Matcha Green Tea, which offers refreshing beverages made from *matcha*, powdered green tea leaves brought in from Japan.

The desire to start a business, even as a student, was so pressing that in his sophomore year, Ric looked for a course that would allow him to do just that. He was too young to qualify for the Business Accelerator program so he enrolled instead in a subject called Management Entrepreneurship. But he later found out that the course had been cancelled—he was the only student who had signed up for it.

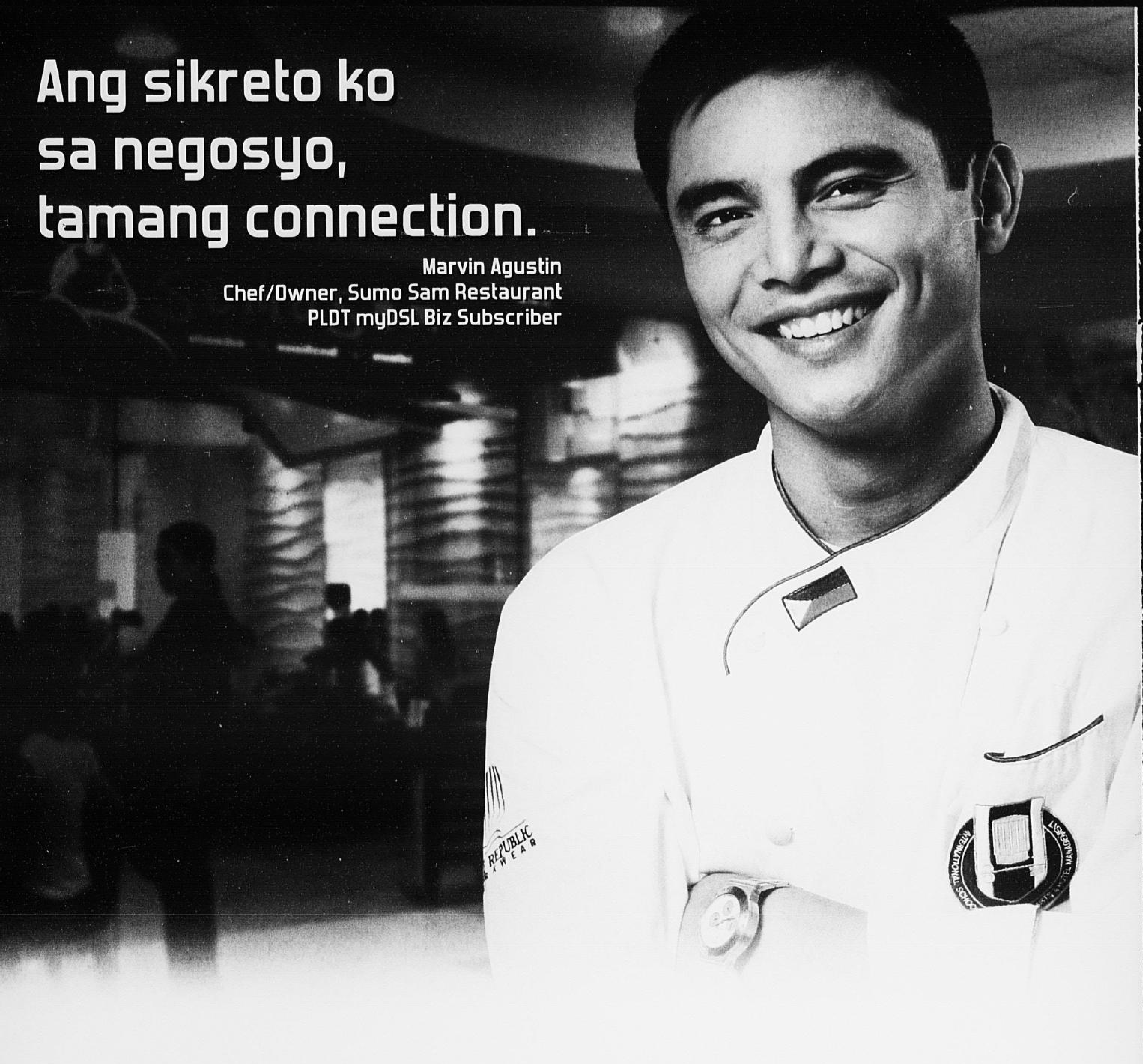
He explains: "I saw this machine that could grind green tea leaves when I was traveling in Japan with my family," he recalls. "It could dispense a variety of drinks made from green tea, and I wanted to figure out how to build a business around it. That's why I wanted to enroll in the subject. But Mike Tan, the teacher who was supposed to handle the course, still took the time to help me set up the business. And my accounting teacher, Dr. Ibarra, helped me with the costs and the pricing."

To ensure that the drinks would be of high quality and authentically Japanese, Lim got a traditional, old Japanese Tea Master to fly into Manila to teach him how to prepare and develop green tea beverages. That the student has learned a lot from the Master is best seen in the number of people buying Matcha. "My staff says even celebrities have come in to buy our drinks, but I'm not a showbiz person so I really don't know who they are," says Lim.

Today Matcha Green Tea has two branches—one in Ateneo JSEC, and one along Pearl Drive, in front of the UA&P. Lim is confident that he can add more branches before he graduates, although he is hesitant to offer franchises until he is sure that he can offer a proper return on investment for potential franchisees. He remains as level-headed with his studies: "Just because I own a business is no excuse not to work hard in my studies and in my company," says the junior college student, with a maturity beyond his years. •

Chinky Chickens

Chris Tiu (right) at Chinky Chickens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